



THE  
CAROLINIANS

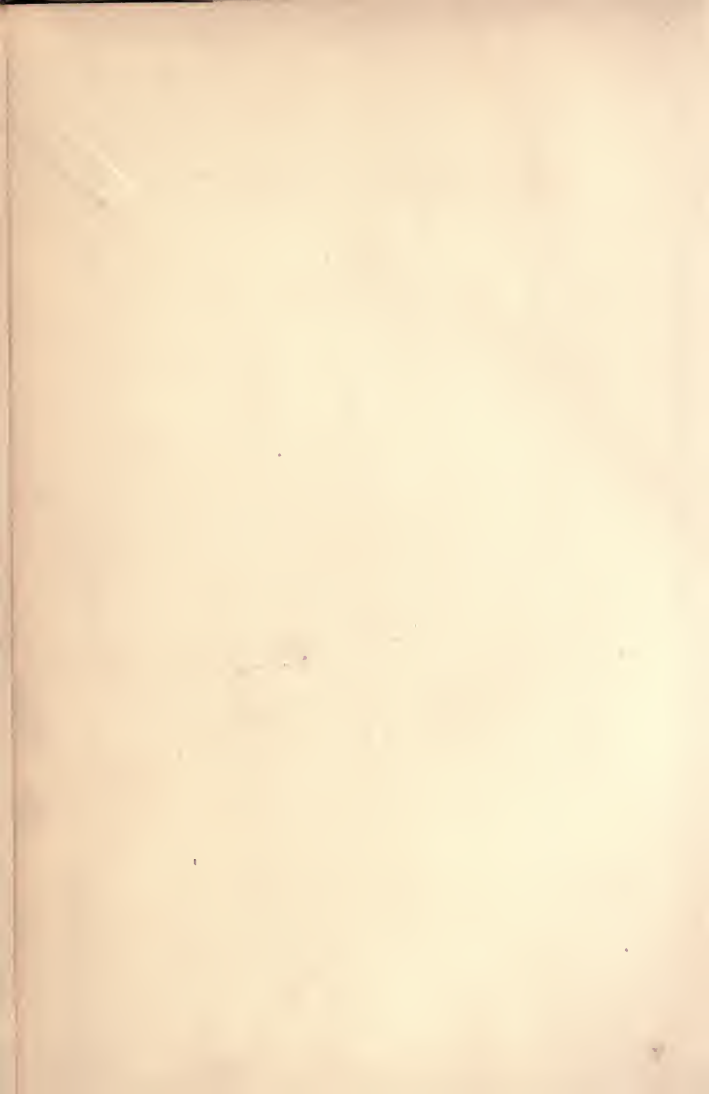
ANNIE  
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THE CAROLINIANS

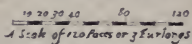




Explanation

1. Johnsons Axeline
2. Draw Bridges
3. Colletons Bastion
4. Carreer Bastion
5. Craven Bastion
6. The Wolf Moor
7. Granville Bastion
8. Ashley Bastion
9. The Pallisades
10. Blakes Bar
11. The Creek on both sides
12. English Ch
13. French Ch
14. Presbyterian Meeting
15. Anabaptist Meeting
16. Court of Guard
17. Col. Abers Bridge
18. another Key
19. The Ministers House
20. The Quakers Meeting House

A Draught of y<sup>e</sup> Town and Harbour of CHARLES-TOWN



Ashley River



Cooper River

Marsh Island





# THE CAROLINIANS

*An Old-fashioned Love Story of Stirring Times  
in the Early Colony of Carolina.*

BY

ANNIE L. SLOAN

NEW YORK AND WASHINGTON  
THE NEALE PUBLISHING COMPANY

1904

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## INTRODUCTION.

This book was not a deliberate act. I did not choose the subject and then go to work to cram for its execution, as does an undergraduate for his examinations. A wonder story of the old Colonial days in South Carolina fell into my hands one day, and becoming enthused with the spirit of the times, the thought came to me that here was unused and picturesque setting for a tale of the men of brawn and courage who became our forbears in this new land and exercised a noteworthy influence in the development of this nation. The story itself is just a simple love story, hundreds of which were doubtless lived in the old town in the old days regardless of terrors by land and by sea, hundreds of which are doubtless being lived in the old town today just in the old way, though neither pirates nor Indians give the stage setting. Of some of the characters who figure in these pages there are living descendants. To these I would say that I do not pretend to give an actual picture of the private lives of their ancestors.

In narrating the public incidents of their lives wherein they distinguished themselves, I have carefully followed the old records and best established authorities. Their private lives as here depicted are purely fiction.

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That there were great chivalry, steadfast endurance and splendid courage among those men upon whom the royal gift of Charles the Second devolved we cannot doubt, and to believe that there were heroes among them is an inspiring belief for us who live today and draw our blood and inspiration from those men whose motto was ever *noblesse oblige*. Should some who read these pages make afterwards a pilgrimage to a neglected corner of old St. Philip's, Charleston, S. C., and find for themselves the graves of those intrepid old leaders, Gov. Robert Johnson and Col. William Rhett, this story will at least have revived a grateful remembrance of great and good men who were faithful in peace and brave in war.

ANNIE L. SLOAN.

Charleston, S. C., November 16, 1904.

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# THE CAROLINIANS

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## CHAPTER I

### HOPES

"Now, young man, thy days and thy glories appear,  
Like sunshine and blossoms in spring of the year;  
Thy vigour of body, thy spirits, thy wit,  
Are perfect and sound and untroubled yet."

—*Wither.*

Untouched by the shadow of things political, Damaris stood in the Governor's garden.

A strange anomaly was the Governor's garden, in old Charles Town, in April of the year of our Lord 1718.

Thick-set with blooms imperial, part of the forest primeval, magnolias towered in native strength; jessamines bound together, with influences sweet, the breezy-breasted shrubs; scarlet pomegranates glowed like the bush of Moses of old; while rose-oleanders and golden thorn shouldered each other against the rough coquina wall, pouring over its jagged inset of glass, cataracts of vivid bloom. In the heart of this riotous color, a grass-plot, therein a dial, a Maltese cross of black marble, whose lengthening shadows had marked for several decades the strenuous hours

through which the heterogeneous colony had struggled; and strangely out of keeping with the lush luxuriance of tropic bloom, about the foot of the dial were beds of pansies and English daisies, that seemed to cling to the shadow of their Old World comrade.

Beyond the peaceful garden the walls of the city, high barriers of concrete well garnished with palisades. Within the walls irregular squares and straggling lines of houses, many of them handsome and well-built, testifying to the wealth and refinement of the colony, that had already gained for itself an enviable reputation among the settlements of the New World. Among the residences goodly houses of worship where conformer and non-conformer alike lifted up their voices in praise and supplication, for by the framing of the Lords Proprietors, and by the advice of the great Locke, religious liberty had been secured to all.

At the intersection of the two thoroughfares, and now falling somewhat into decay, stood the old St. Philips, built in 1681; while somewhat nearer the river stood the new English Church, in process of construction, in whose goodly walls, well-laid, centered the pride of the Province.

The Independent Church, known as the White Meeting House, that gave to the principal roadway its name, stood a space farther on. Within a stone's throw of the new English Church stood that of the French Huguenots, while that of the Anabaptists stood close to the southern boundary. In among the isolated houses were bits of marshland where waterfowl nested peacefully and little tidal creeks meandered sluggishly.



Sharp-set without and within stood the fortifications, grim keys to the safety of the Province, military genius guided by local experience having placed them at every open point of danger.

Stoutly Granville's Bastion guarded the broad sweep made by the bold curve of the Cooper River; Carteret's menaced beyond the drawbridge where the town began to lose itself in swamp and forest; Colleton's held the southwest corner overlooking jungles of palmetto and myrtle; the Half Moon Works upon the Cooper circled in front of the Court of Guard; Craven's Bastion, at the northeast corner of the wall, completed the eastern line of fortifications; and where the ragged palisades bristled bravely behind the more exposed batteries, Ashley's redoubtable guns completed the defenses. To the northward a long, irregular line of horn works and redoubts that set grim teeth against the green fringes of the forest, wherein night prowlers ranged hungrily, mingling their raucous cries with the vague night-voices of the town.

Always somewhere in those primeval fastnesses lurked stealthy-footed savages, keen-scented, alert, detecting with prescience mysterious, the slightest negligence of guard, falling upon the unprotected, scalping, burning, blazing their trail with murder and outrage.

Hard beset had been the Province; tomahawk and black flag kept them in constant malease. Two Indian wars, in 1712 and 1715, had drained the last resources of arms and exchequer. Vane had been a-pyrating upon their coast, destroying, burning, terrorizing.

Harassed by land and threatened by sea stood the struggling Colony.

English gentlemen, English adventurers, English outlaws, Dutch skippers, Dutch colonists from New Amsterdam, French refugees for the faith's sake, French artisans and French vine-dressers, rebellious Highlanders, French Redemptionists, Irish emigrants, Quakers, Dissenters, Cavaliers, Roundheads, stood shoulder to shoulder in the stern fight to maintain a foothold and build up a home upon this fruitful coast.

Tried to the utmost stood they now. Disaster followed disaster. Political and civil discord seethed also among them, but to break out into open feud when outside pressure should be less strenuous. Arrogant Churchmen denied to Dissenter the rights of office and representation, the measures of the Lords Proprietors were vastly distasteful, unredeemed currency flooded the land.

Even now while Mistress Damaris Johnson idled in the sunshine, decking herself vaingloriously with pomegranate blossoms, Captain Maynard, who had been gaining for himself, in fighting with the Yamassees, more honors and hardships than ordinarily fall to the lot of twenty-five, was closeted with the Governor in council official.

Governor Johnson leaned heavily upon his elbow among the papers and documents that littered the table. Before him was spread a roughly-draughted map of the Province. Now he gazed upon it fixedly, anon he looked out of the window seawards where some half-dozen sails showed faint against the horizon.

"Then, and I understand you aright, Captain Maynard, you would advise that a force be sent against the Indians about Stono? How agrees that with our lately-signed treaty of peace? Speaks thus provincial honor?"

"Not honor, but necessity, in savage warfare. Their treaty of peace is but a lying subterfuge, under the cover of which they take advantage of our credulity. A blacker-hearted traitor than Sanute never drew bow. To gain time he speaks of peace. He has not forgotten the thrashing we gave him and his braves. Only blood wipes blood from an Indian's memory. It is a scalp for a scalp, a life for a life. Sanute smokes the calumet in our sight, through the forest his swift runners go, from tribe to tribe passes the rattlesnake quiver. Some tribes we have crushed, some have eluded us, some are decimated by small-pox, some have signed the treaty of friendship. A tinker's dam for their friendship—it lives as long as their interest, but their revenge lives forever! A general uprising of the strong would number our treacherous allies among them. There is division among them now; tribal war rages. With one strong movement, promptly executed, we could crush them utterly, drive them from our midst, and secure the safety of our harassed borders. Shall we allow this opportunity to pass, your Excellency? Shall we sit us down in slothful ease while a thousand outrages call for redress?" pleaded the young man vehemently.

"And whence shall come a fresh force?" demanded the Governor sharply. "Can we raise up those who sleep? Will the forest give up its dead? Can we

make good with gold the paper we have stamped? Will the Lords Proprietors uphold and strengthen us? No, I say unto you, Captain Maynard, that it cannot be! Of the company who went forth with you, you have brought back a handful. Out in the forest many a goodly Englishman lies rotting with a poisoned arrow in his breast. You stamp out one tribe, another takes its place. Only with time can be strengthened our borders. We must suffer to be harried, we must endure while our men are scalped, while violent hands are laid upon our women. We are a little people, weak and of few resources, planted in the midst of a great land, hard beset with enemies. For this present we cannot conquer; we must endure. But, and it please God, and He gives us strength, we will hold our own. Aye, I say unto you, though England forget her foster-child, though the powers of hell are leagued against us, we will hold our own!"

After this unwonted outburst, in a voice that rang with determination, the Governor leaned back in his chair in tense silence. He was a grave man, a man little given to vain speech; when he spoke others listened.

The lines of his face were leonine; brows that sloped downward from a broad, low forehead; down-trending lines about the eyes, nose and mouth, giving to it a look of grim purpose. In his eyes, somewhat narrowed by the down-drawn lids, that look of inscrutable knowledge and power that one sees in the eyes of a quiescent lion. His face was of that rare whiteness that goes sometimes with fine health and great forcefulness of character. He wore a full-bottomed periwig, a suit of grey French cloth, with fac-

ings of white and silver, save upon occasions of high ceremonial.

He was revered because of his wisdom, feared because of his justice, admired because of his courage, loved as one loves the high, not as one loves his intimates, and thus he lived his private life somewhat apart from his fellow man.

The younger man, who had also grown to be a part of the overpowering silence, felt the finality of his decision. To some men it is given to be wise, even in youth, where women are not concerned. Although the Governor had declared against him he felt the wisdom of the decision. To some young men it is also permitted to be reasonable when a greater than they argue the case. Furthermore, there were reasons, non-politic, why it behooved this young man to be at peace with the Governor. His only remonstrance was an occasional uneasy shifting in his chair during the protracted silence. His defeat went hard with him, nevertheless, for his plans were brain of his brain, heart of his heart.

He was a strong man, tensely modelled, not a slack muscle in his six feet of vigorous humanity; warm and warmly alive with the virile coloring that comes from daily contact with nature and aboriginal conditions. As the blood of the red-deer, the vivid life that pulsed through his veins. English born and bred, the older man was the product of many generations of mental and moral force delicately adjusted to the physical. Born in a primeval country, under the stress of a travailing civilization, in the younger man the physical was forced into temporary prominence;

the mental and the moral, the powers behind the throne.

With the older man, fighting was the instinct of self-preservation; with the younger, the power that delights to do and to dare and to conquer.

And were not worlds awaiting conquest? Worlds beyond the war-cry of savage and tomahawk and carnage? And thinking upon one of these worlds he grew restless and broke the silence.

"If your Excellency has no further need of me I would pray to be excused."

"Certainly, at your pleasure. Will you be returning straightway home?"

"Not directly. From hence, with your Excellency's permission, I go into your garden."

"Damaris?" asked the Governor laconically.

"Damaris!" repeated the young man bravely.

"A fair field and a free lance. Good fortune attend you!" The Governor spoke lightly, smiled wisely, and bowed formally.

The younger man returned the salutation in silent embarrassment, then the Governor stepped forward with outstretched hand and took into the firm pressure of his strong, cool fingers the brown hand with its quickened pulse.

"Thank you; your Excellency is very kind," spoke the young man hoarsely, and with head uplifted walked swiftly from the room.

Alone, the Governor resumed his seat.

"Damaris," he spoke softly to himself; "Damaris," and a smile softened his face. "Damaris has a harder heart than her father, young man; there 'twill be war to the knife. She is as pleased with your scalp as

you are with the redman's, but as to loving you, I fear me she knows not how. She is a playful lassie and troubles herself not with her lovers' heartaches. Would that he were my son!" The Governor sighed deeply. "So goes a brave man forth to defeat, nor can any stay him. Well, it is the world's way, and the courage of youth, and being a fool, and not knowing it. Being a fool is not bad. Finding it out is very bad! Well, well; let Damaris be! Now for the letters to my Lords Proprietors of short and uncertain memory. The packet leaves to-morrow. Under Providence, pirates, and the forgetfulness of our masters, we may look for an answer within the year. Would God they stood where I stand, then would matters be otherwise. As it is, they do not know and do not see the straits in which we are placed. Some say they will not see. May their eyes be speedily opened, lest we perish. I know and I see, yet stand I here with hands tied, a sorry enough figurehead, truly, in this turbulent Province. The foul fiend fly away with a man who is a figurehead, I say! One who runs his head into the noose swung for another plays but a beggarly part in a right unmerry game. And yet—" there was a long silence, and when the Governor finished his sentence he smiled sadly and spoke but two words—" 'Noblesse oblige'!"

## CHAPTER II

### THE PROMISE OF SUMMER

"My love is fair, my love is gay,  
As fresh as bin the flowers in May."

—George Peele.

Captain Maynard strode out into the sunshine with head erect and shining eyes. That pressure of the Governor's hand had made him a taller man. The unerring instinct of the woodsman led him straitly to his quarry. Damaris stood under a magnolia, the sifted sunshine making a green and gold fretwork above her head, under her feet, and all about her. The soft, creamy gown shone with the shifting opalescent lights, and scarlet pomegranate blossoms flamed warmly in her fair hair and against her cool throat.

"Damaris, I have come," spoke the young man gladly, reaching out his arms toward her.

"'I came, I saw, I conquered!'" laughed the girl, holding her pomegranate branch, sword-like, in mock-heroic pose.

"Such is a right pretty message from lady's lips, Mistress Damaris, and I will proceed to take the spoils of conquest," answered the young man boldly.

"All conquests are not so easy as the aborigines, and some spoils are vexation of spirit!" mocked the girl, but there was that in her pose that stayed the



Captain's daring. The white face might belong to a creature immaterial, but the eyes to an avenging angel, the red lips to a woman.

For a space they measured each other with outward calm, though the pulses of both beat at life's fever heat. There was that in the girl's face that suggested the Governor; there was the same calm whiteness of the mental and moral well-adjusted, the same suggestion of possible tenseness in the lines. Life had keyed the Governor's face to the strenuous march of the world epic; as yet the girl's face was attuned to the music of youth's unheeding paradise.

Captain Maynard, brown and lusty, and strong in the consciousness of man's inalienable right to rule the world, looked undaunted into her eyes. How often in the heart of the mysterious forest, while death lurked but an arm's breadth away, had he lain in his blanket, his hand on his musket, gazing up through the ebony fringes of the pines at the sky all ashine with the tender moonlight, and likened it to Damaris's eyes, and the forest had seemed no longer desolate, but beautiful with a presence that could not be blotted out by the death-breeding shadows.

Although her eyes dared and her lips mocked, Damaris took good heed of the stalwart soldier before her; she rejoiced in strength and daring, as do all women. Seeing that he would not break the silence, and feeling something warmer than the Governor's blood quickening under his gaze, she asked mockingly:

"Dost like the enemy's front?"

"That I do, right heartily. Truly I like it so well that, by your leave, I would have it for my own!"

"Right bold you have grown among your savages, Captain Maynard. You need to meet a worthier foe."

"And so I have, Mistress Damaris; but, by your leave, I would bespeak a truce."

"Times of peace become you not; you were ever readier with your sword than with your tongue."

"Then, since you are the readier with your speech, it would well become you to teach me to be a worthier foe."

"Nay, not so; my only weapon is my woman's wit; it were unwise to arm one's foes."

"To arm one's lovers were a prettier usage."

"Courtesy were a prettier usage still. Your manners have not gained through long tarrying in wigwams!" she answered hotly.

"Tis my love that has gained, and in one heart there is not room for love and measured manners."

"And in this garden there is not room for you and me!"

"Think you so? Methinks in paradise there were always room, but were we one 'twould save further parley."

"Since oil and water never mix, that were impossible!"

"Even so, Mistress Damaris; but love and love do mix so sweetly and so strongly that heaven cannot set them asunder."

"When in heaven you have found this to be truly so, come back to me—then will I give fair heed; hearsay evidence convinces not."

"Without you it were not heaven, Mistress Damaris. Were you there I should not need to return."

"Only angels enter there."

"Then fear I that Mistress Damaris cannot enter, so would I liefer remain upon earth."

"The half-way ground of earth will have passed away."

"Well, with you there could be no hell for me."

"There you would have the advantage of me."

"Not so; we could meet upon equal ground."

"You flatter yourself. Even among devils I would be chief!"

"That I do not question."

"What mean you?"

"No more than this, that in whatsoever sphere we found ourselves—celestial, terrestrial, or debatable—there would you be greatly first."

"A most sorry recantation."

"Not recantation, but declaration."

"A questionable declaration."

"Then will I make it beyond dispute, Mistress Damaris."

"Upon a man's word, impossible!"

"That remains to be proven by a woman's."

"With false premises a woman holds no commerce."

"Then, by my faith, so will I make my premises so strong with love that they need no proving!"

"Words are idle."

"Actions are real!" There was a tone in his voice and a look in his eyes that made Mistress Damaris somewhat uneasy, for all her fine disdain.

"Nay, I would spare you the trouble of both words and deeds!" she spoke quickly.

"'Twere no trouble, but a pleasure, I do assure you!"

"Then 'twere equally agreeable to deny you the pleasure."

"Nay, not so fast, nor so out of hand, Mistress Damaris. You are past-mistress of word-play, and it is all vastly fine; but I am not a man of straw to be blown aside with a breath, and when a man is athirst for love, words are as dry leaves in his throat. There is a time for all things, a time to love and a time to play at love; my playtime is past; I want the substance, not the shadow. No more parrying. Nay, do not run, it isn't soldierly; besides, catch you I would in two strides, and hold you I would, flouted you never so roundly! Three months ago I stood here in this garden with you. The flowers were icicles then, but the thaw seemed to begin in your heart. Wait, you said—wait. One swallow does not make much of a spring, but it seemed almost summer to me then. Three months, with my life in my hands and my love in my heart, have passed since then. Through forest and flood the hope has stayed with me; in hunger and in battle it has not departed from me. To-day the world is glad with the promise of spring, Damaris; have you no promise for me?"

"The spring's promise is but a fickle promise, so many things may chance," spoke the girl softly. "The summer's promise were the surer pledge, and in the autumn comes harvest!"

"Are you playing with me, Damaris?" he asked sternly.

"That I do not know. I wish that I did," she answered hesitatingly.

"Tell me what your heart says."

"One moment it tells me yea, the next nay."

"It is not your wont to dally thus."

"It is not my wont to give myself away."

"Nor would I have it so, but just this once, Sweet-heart!"

"I cannot."

"Speak you earnestly, Damaris?"

"How can I really tell? What I really think, what I really feel are as a sealed casket to me. It would be a sore trouble to break the seal, and were I to do so methinks I would be sorry all the days of my life, because to learn about one's real self means to learn to suffer."

"Damaris, Damaris! Unto a man it is not given to understand you! Why make a mystery of love? To me it is the plainest fact in my life. To me it is the one thing in the world that I know beyond question!" he spoke vehemently.

"And to me it is the one thing in the world I do not know."

"Will you ever come to know?"

"How can I say? We watch the blossoms, but who can tell which will bring forth fruit in due season? There are so many things, frost and wind—and other hands."

"Are there other hands trying to reach my fruit, Damaris?"

"Mayhap! You have been long away, and you set no hedge about your vineyard."

"Counted your promise as no hedge?"

"Thieves break through and steal."

"Unless the watchman consent to the theft, it cannot be."

"What, and the watch be overpowered?"

"He should not live to tell the tale!"

"The master should have set a surer watch."

"Were he the master, so would he. Hark ye, Damaris, I am over-weary of idle words. Tell me truly if there be another?"

Captain Maynard spoke as one in authority; his blue-black eyes, that came with his quick temper from his Irish grandmother, looked straight into Damaris's baffling grey ones, and she dropped them straightway and fell to tracing figures in the sand with the point of her high-heeled shoe. Captain Maynard was abject enough to wish that he were the brilliant buckle upon that self-same shoe, but he kept his eyes hard, nevertheless.

Meanwhile, Damaris wished that she had been born a liar. Maynard had deprived her of her accustomed weapons and she was skilled in the use of no other. Perhaps to the most honest the temptation comes to speak falsely, at least one time in life. Perhaps, like Damaris, they are restrained, not from fear of doing it, but from fear of doing it badly. Furthermore, to tell a falsehood is one thing, to sustain it quite another. Damaris was standing upon quaking ground—she could not go back and she dared not go forward. She might have subverted her moral sense to the point of telling a falsehood, but she knew that her mental would betray her. That delicate adjustment that she had inherited from the Governor defeated her, as it has many an upright man when the shifty have won tarnished laurels.

Captain Maynard was waiting with a patience more than reasonably manly. Perhaps his forbear-

ance might have been less commendable had she been less good to look upon. As it was, she was a feast for his eyes—from her ruffled hair to her restless slipper point, being most harmoniously as well as beautifully made. He chafed inwardly over the situation and felt a strong temptation to bear her off like a Sabine brave and thus free the situation of its complications. He was a man little given to speculation, and with the cocksureness that comes with youth, success and a good digestion, he was quick to decide, quick to act, no intangible soul-webs hanging between him and his decisions. However, he had now reached the limit of natural law, a woman, the unsolved connecting link between the material and the immaterial; and thus thrown out of his reckoning, he found himself falling back upon the wisdom of serpents, which is largely composed of silence. But even the wisdom of serpents cannot long dominate the impatient heart of a man who half-way suspects that a woman loves him, and that woman in the reach of his inquisitorial power. So, while Mistress Damaris devoted herself harmlessly to angles and parallels and triangles in the sand, he repeated his unanswered question with renewed harshness.

“Is there another?”

“There is no other,” she answered dispassionately, and continued her terrestrial decoration with provoking calm.

“Then will we wait for the promise of summer, Sweetheart? God grant that it fail not!” There was a gladness in the young Captain’s voice like a song of the waters when the ice is broken and they

rush forth upon their way rejoicing. He moved toward her, all his virile manhood ablaze in his face. She fell back from him swiftly. He frowned darkly and stiffened his arms to his side.

"You need have no fear; I want no forbidden fruits."

"Not forbidden, but unripe," she answered with a smile.

"Just one little token, one little seal upon the promise of summer, Sweetheart; one little token of summer's largesse," he pleaded.

She looked at one white hand, then at the other.

"Which shall be the traitor, I wonder?" she spoke ruefully.

"Nay, not traitor, but peacemaker," he answered gently.

"Only one little token, and that with discretion," she said very low.

He lifted the hand with its crimson lading of blossom—she had slipped the other under her kerchief—and pressed his lips upon it.

To him the fullness of summer seemed to have come, while indeed he but gathered the violets upon the edge of the snow.



## CHAPTER III

### THE TRAIL OF THE SERPENT

"Sweet looks show love, yet they are but as beams;  
Fair words seem true, yet they are but as wind."

—*Anon.*

A week had elapsed since that momentous April morning when Damaris had held her own so hardly with the doughty colonial Captain. When a woman is in love her tongue is at its worst; she is hampered by the fear of revealing what she would prefer concealing; but when a man is in love he puts his trust in the weapon of speech and so his words are as the sword of Gideon.

Each morning had found the Captain closeted with the Governor in council official, but the halo of glory that he had hoped to wrench from savage brows had paled beside the light that dwelt in beauty's eyes. The half hour passed with the Governor seemed immeasurably long; the several odd hours passed in the garden with the Governor's daughter immeasurably short.

To Captain Maynard it seemed that the promise of summer had come before the swelling of pomegranate buds into jewelled fruit.

Damaris was all things gracious and divine. She had laid her weapons by; it was a time of peace. The human instincts of the Captain expanded in the

fervor of love's tropic. There was a rumor of pirates in Okericock Inlet and among the waste islands that girt the bay, but the soul of the Captain was at peace with the world; he would have shaken hands with Black Beard and broken bread with Vane; he had beaten his sword into a Cupid's bow. He whistled back to a red-bird that whistled to its mate, and pitied him because whistling seemed such a limited medium of courtship.

His attire had kept pace with the gaiety of his mood, though to women are solely accredited such vanities. Scarlet ribbons fluttered from his knees as he strode along under the glistening-roofed magnolias. Scarlet, vivid as her own personality, was Damaris's color—not peach color, nor azure, nor mauve, the delicate tints of languid women or fashion.

Suddenly, with the instinct born of woodcraft, the Captain paused. There was a new voice in the garden this morning—not the voice of bird or goddess or flower. The Captain recognized the voice, ground his heel into the gravel and turned right-about. With reflection came wisdom. The instinct of a man is to fight for his own, so he turned again and proceeded toward the voice, but his face was no longer the face of a man at peace with the world.

Damaris leaned back idly in a chair of wrought iron from Nuremberg. Some neglected woman's work lay all a-tangle in her lap, and already a thrifty nest-building wren had flown away with some silken strands, wind-blown into an azalea.

Upon a bench opposite sat a man good to behold. Stalwart English in every line of face and form, of goodly attire too; a man bred to courts, and sitting easy to the ways of the world that man makes for himself within the devious coils of wealth and fashion; a flavor of the Old World in gesture and speech, a flavor of something warmer in the eyes that dwelt upon Mistress Damaris.

In truth it was Mr. Francis Yonge, English cavalier and gentleman of no mean ability; a most honorable member of the Colonial Council, Deputy of my Lord Carteret, Surveyor-General of the Province; a man of much weight in the Colony, of large fortune and of good report, despite a wild humor and adventurous fancy, and as such no mean rival for a provincial captain, killed he Indians never so bravely.

The two men greeted each other with the prescribed courtesy and the unprescribed measuring of each other's prospects. Upon the face of Mistress Damaris was a smile unholy, something of the look the sighing King Francis wore when he found sport in his lions.

"Captain Maynard will pardon me that I did not recognize him the more quickly," spoke Mr. Yonge, with a fine affectation of concern. "In truth, I saw no scalps, no strings of wampum, no calumet, so I hesitated before greeting the great Indian Captain."

"Are scalps necessary to proclaim the conqueror?" asked Damaris innocently.

"Indeed, I so believed them to be," answered Mr. Yonge.

"Then hie you straightway back to London Town and gather yours, Mr. Yonge—the blonde and the brunette and the powdered that have strewn your way from Spring Gardens to St. James—else your glory is unsung. Perchance some of Ophelia's may float in the Pump Room still."

"Be not cruel, Mistress Damaris; mock not a brother's woe! 'Twere easy to gather your spoils. Truly, you might scalp the most honorable Council of Charles Town with one fell blow. Here are two that but wait to be attached to your girdle—one the right honorable ornament of a right doughty Provincial, that has escaped the tomahawks of forty tribes; the other a goodly English one, that has cost its owner many a guinea in powders and friseurs."

"And could ill be spared, since 'tis the covering of ideas less valuable!" retorted Captain Maynard.

"So it cover not a sorry wit, the damage were the less. By my troth, 'twere a kindly Navassa that, relenting, left yours," replied Mr. Yonge.

"'Twere a mercy for you both that scalping does not expose hearts," interposed Mistress Damaris, "else would the discredit be the greater for you both, so discovering your vacancy."

"Indeed, you speak truly, since Mistress Damaris hath stolen them both," replied Mr. Yonge sweetly.

"Nay, not so," answered Damaris, "seeing I hold no commerce with second-handed wares. But look you, Mr. Yonge, you need but inquire at the Three Balls of some woman of fashion and there will you find that yours lies in pawn for some second-rate compliment."

"Nay, Mistress Damaris, beshrew me! but in all your life you have never given your servant so much as a second-rate compliment, else might I esteem myself fairly repaid, seeing that my heart is not mine, but a most unworthy vessel filled with yourself."

"Nay, you do arrogate too much to yourself when you affirm that I would tarry there even in passing."

"'Twould only be in passing, Mistress Damaris. None would so hazard his word as to declare that you would tarry with constancy anywhere."

"One makes not dwellings upon unstable foundations, Mr. Yonge; 'twould be the house builded upon sand."

"Nay, 'twould be the moonbeam resting upon the bosom of the lake. To-morrow the lake knows full well that 'twill be gone, but it has lived the hour for which it was made; for the rest 'tis a waste of waters," he murmured.

"Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel," laughed Damaris.

"Say you so truly?" he asked in a tone that might have been jest, might have been earnest.

Damaris laughed uneasily. There were two pairs of eyes fixed upon her—those of Mr. Yonge, fervid for all his raillery; those of Captain Maynard consuming her with wrath unquenchable.

"How can a woman speak of so great matter as water?" she answered lightly. "With time and perseverance 'tis said to have worn away the rocks primeval. Woman is but a tender creature, of easy complaisance and ready fancy—how may she hope to withstand?"

Mr. Yonge leaned over, and under pretense of gathering up a falling tangle of silk let his fingers fall lightly upon hers.

Captain Maynard, lynx-eyed, stiff with anger, tongue-tied with indignation, sprang to his feet.

Damaris lifted her eyes with slow insouciance, but in the throwing back of her head there was a warning of danger.

"Captain Maynard, I beg of you to gather up my silks. My careless fingers set them all a-tangle to-day, and the gallant Mr. Yonge, from London Town, has been so blinded by beauty that he cannot distinguish between my fingers and the silks," she spoke sweetly.

"Thank you, Mistress Damaris," answered the Captain testily; "but of woman and woman's chattels I have no knowledge, so I will pray you have me excused."

"He who knows nothing, knows all things; henceforth will I fear you," she laughed.

"A Daniel come unto judgment!" cried Mr. Yonge, who had been nursing his resentment with smiling countenance.

"Or rather a Solomon come into his inheritance!" retorted Damaris sharply.

"The fool hath said in his heart—"

"That there is no retribution!" finished Damaris, laughing.

"He had no knowledge of women, by my troth!" replied Mr. Yonge ruefully.

"Else he had not been a fool," answered Damaris sweetly.

"'Tis passing plain that some men have," interposed Captain Maynard.

"Faith, you and I," answered Mr. Yonge. "And which were the greater no woman could tell."

"Please speak for yourself, Mr. Yonge, and it please you," answered the other stiffly.

"So do I; but more generous still, I speak for you in so good a cause," replied Mr. Yonge, with his unflinching good humor.

"I would spare your commendation," said the other ungraciously. The easy pleasantry irritated him.

"Nay, but I give it all the more ungrudgingly, seeing you do not ask it. Only to beggars do we deny favors," he answered suavely. No one could accuse Mr. Yonge of losing his temper in argument, however he lost his heart to women and his gold to dice, and in words as in other things the victory is to the cool.

Captain Maynard unlimbered his guns for action, Damaris smiled wickedly, Mr. Yonge amusedly, but fortunately for the irate Captain a diversion was made by a servant approaching with a message from the Governor to the effect that he prayed the honor of the company of Mr. Yonge and Captain Maynard to dinner, and would Mistress Damaris be so kind as to send him the key of his wine closet.

Damaris blushed guiltily as she slipped her hand into her pocket and brought forth the missing key, then she seconded the invitation of her father, which was accepted by Mr. Yonge with alacrity, and with grim ungraciousness by his rival.

Damaris lifted her eyebrows airily, gathered up her injured silks and walked away with Mr. Yonge. She stopped to gather a handful of shrubs and a spray of woodbine, she broke a branch of syringa and paused to catch the brilliant drops of melody that overflowed the connubial loving-cup of a mocking-bird balancing himself perilously upon a Yaupon bush.

The joy of the spring was in her blood, also the madness of rioting sap. Like a white moth she hovered among the flowers, now in shadow, now in sunlight—opalescent, quivering, keenly alive. At her side loitered Francis Yonge, his debonair speeches waking her laughter that was wafted back to the sulky Captain standing irresolute under the magnolias.

“A fool weeps when a woman laughs. Fire is wasted that neither warms nor burns!” he muttered discontentedly to himself, then strode determinedly after the merry couple.



## CHAPTER IV

### PROPHECY

"Cry, Trojans, cry! lend me ten thousand eyes,  
And I will fill them with prophetic tears."

—*Troilus and Cressida.*

That solid refreshment known as dinner when George II. was king, being ended, the cloth drawn, the dessert upon the mahogany, the desultory meanderings of conversation were abandoned and the discussion settled upon the all-absorbing political situation.

The condition of Carolina differed widely from that of the other colonies. The large number of Englishmen of rank holding honorable and lucrative positions under the Lords Proprietors had brought to the Province and preserved within it a culture, wealth and refinement less rarely to be met with in the other colonies.

Then too the holding of special charter under the Lords Proprietors, and the guarantee of religious liberty, were conducive to special conditions not altogether happy or easy of administration. The princely gift of Charles II. to the Lords William and George Berkeley, Craven, Carteret, Ashley, Clarendon and Albemarle had not been without its drawbacks to the charter-vested Proprietors.

Eternal dissensions and dissatisfactions had prevailed, the which had in somewhat subsided after Governor Archdale's visit and administration recently ended. However, now in 1718 all of the old grievances seemed to have revived, as well as new ones equally distressing.

The breach between the Colonists and the Proprietors had been widened in 1715 by an appeal of the former to the Lords Proprietors for help when a war with the Yamassees was pending; but upon the chance of being denied, they had instructed their emissaries to apply to the King for relief. The King referred the matter to the Lords Commissioners of Trade and Plantations, while these made objection that as long as the Province of Carolina was proprietary the nation should not undertake the support of it.

The Lords Proprietors arranged with His Majesty that he should furnish certain monies, the which not being paid by the Proprietors within specified time, the government should revert to the Crown. These proceedings had aggravated and made more strained the relations between Colonists and Proprietors, and now in 1718 the vexed question of paper currency was producing renewed irritation.

It had recently become necessary to erect and garrison three forts at the cost of the Colony, the Proprietors, notwithstanding, having recently repealed the law appropriating the profits of the Indian trade to the public protection.

The vindictive Yamassees kept the Colony in a state of uneasiness, Carolina being the frontier of the other colonies, as it were, to the southward,

where the encroaching Spaniard wreaked private vengeance and national feud against them by inciting the surrounding Indians to massacre and pillage. The horrors of St. Matteo and the destruction of Lord Cardross's colony at Port Royal were written in blood in provincial annals.

Public credit was in a disastrous condition. Soldiers refused to fight in defense of the Colony without pay. The Province, weighed down by debt, could not furnish supplies. The people complained of the incapacity of a government that could not protect them, yet would not refer them to the Crown, their idea of a perfect protection being a direct dependence upon the King. Governor Daniel, appreciating the position of the Colony, had joined with the people in their appeal to the Proprietors, but nothing had been accomplished, and thus stood matters when Gov. Robert Johnson had come into office.

Added now to the other difficulties, London merchants and money-lenders complained of the excess of paper currency flooding the market, and Governor Johnson received official instruction to reduce it. Merchants and money-lenders lost by these bills of credit, while the planters, who profited by them, were constantly in debt, therefore an eternal clashing between mercantile and agricultural interests.

The Governor, a man of much influence, after great exertions prevailed upon the Assembly to pass a law for sinking and paying off these bills of credit in three years, by a tax upon land and negroes. This Act being passed, both Proprietors and Colon-

ists were better satisfied, and the Governor entertained great hopes of a final reconciliation.

At the time when the dessert was placed upon the table in the Governor's dining-room, Mr. Yonge was speaking vigorously.

"No, your Excellency, I beg to disagree with you. There will never be a reconciliation between us and our Proprietary governors. They sit in London amid an old civilization and make laws impossible for us in the new; furthermore, they are indifferent to their obligations to us, and with an ocean rolling between, our persistence amounts to little. There is a chance of an eventual profit and so they hold on to us. But they reckon amiss; we are daily slipping from their grasp, and they will awaken to a dawn of reason only when their sun has set."

"I trust that you are mistaken, Mr. Yonge," spoke the Governor quietly. "The recent passing of the Act to pay off the bills of credit within three years has done much to establish confidential relations between us."

To your Excellency belongs the credit of that honorable bill, but it has come too late. The trouble is too deep-seated and many-rooted; its fibres undernet our whole administrative fabric."

"Again I say that I trust you are wrong," replied the Governor.

"Would God that he were," interposed Mr. Jonathan Skrine, "but I think he speaks truly this time. There are hardly a handful of men well affected to the Proprietors. In whichever way you go the ill-will of the people is like the buzzing of bees about you. So much venom stings sooner or later."

"You gentlemen are sadly unhopeful. What do you think, Captain Maynard?" asked the Governor, turning to the Captain, who during the dinner had sat in rather unusual silence.

"I have not recently had many opportunities of judging, your Excellency, having been so long time afield; and since being at home my duties have interfered."

"Pleasures, not duties, I should call them," interposed Mr. Yonge, with meaning, looking hard at Damaris.

Whereupon Damaris, being deeply occupied in cracking a nut, brandished the cracker aloft and cried:

"Here's to the Lords Proprietors, our most unfatherly masters. Even as I treat this walnut, so will we treat them!"

"My daughter!" remonstrated the Governor.

"True, father, I am your daughter. I also am an American and a rebel. You are an Englishman, bound by tradition; you cannot help it, the vice only runs out in the third generation. I am regenerate; there is something in the air of this new world that changes those born in it. It will not be so long before we will have forgotten that there is a King in England!"

The three men turned upon her simultaneously, with a startled look.

"What do you mean, Damaris?" asked the Governor gravely.

"I do not know," she answered, vaguely gazing into the distance with unseeing eyes. "I never know what I mean—things come to me, that is all."

There was a silence broken at last by her. "Here's to another Lord Proprietor!" she cried suddenly as she cracked a nut with vicious energy.

"That is not a Proprietor, but my heart, Mistress," whispered Mr. Yonge, looking at her intensely, as he had a fashion of doing when most devoted—his lids close drawn, till only a ray of burning light glowed between.

"Your heart?" laughed Damaris gayly. "So it is; here I have it hard and fast." She had dropped her nut and held the empty crackers close together.

"So has it been consumed in passion for you," he murmured.

"Not to mention some score of others. It has been burning a long time; it took many flames to consume it. However, it flatters me to be staged with Mrs. Bracegirdle and Mrs. Oldfield, not to mention lesser lights, private and public."

"You are pleased to be facetious."

"Nay, pained to be truthful."

"Whatever you are, you are always adorable."

"That is no longer news to me—my nurse told me that even before I could understand. Mr. Skrine, won't you come to my assistance?" she asked playfully, turning to her other neighbor with a pretty smile.

"With my two arms and my indifferent wit I am at your service ever," he replied warmly, placing his hand upon his heart with a grace peculiarly his own. He was a short little man, this worthy Mr. Jonathan Skrine, with short little arms, which he used after the manner of a penguin its flippers.

"A declaration, 'pon my word!" whispered the incorrigible Mr. Yonge. "A blatant, bold and open declaration!"

"Mr. Skrine," said Damaris, ignoring the other and smiling upon her stout little champion in the puce-colored suit, in whose face there were more circles and curves than seemed possible with a given set of muscles, and whose vaulted eyebrows seemed always trying to hide under the edge of his ample wig; "Mr. Skrine, is it the fashion in Holland for gentlemen of taste to sharpen their wits at the expense of the ladies?"

"Nay, Mistress Damaris, there, as here, they are hardly put to use them in their own defense."

"Bravo, Jonathan! Blessed be the ancestors that bequeathed you to posterity! A little more and Mistress Damaris will make of you a wit as she has of her other admirers," cried Mr. Yonge, clapping his hands gleefully. "Dick Steele could not have done better."

"Dick Steele? Who is Dick Steele? Is he recently come into the Province?" asked Mr. Skrine guilelessly.

"Nay, not so; even with Mr. Yonge came he. Fair imitation is actual presence," answered Damaris gayly. "Poor Mr. Steele must indeed be a-weary of his life."

"And wherefore, Mistress Damaris?"

"When he thinks upon his imitators."

"Not imitators, but debtors. Mistress Damaris, he must indeed be of a vastly enduring constitution else they would long since have harried him into his grave."

"By your own word are his imitators the more injurious."

"And wherefore, and it please you?"

"At the grave ends the evil his creditors can do him; his imitators will continue to tarnish his reputation by sorry counterfeits as long as the sun shines."

"Having fairly vanquished your opponent," here the Governor interposed smiling, "I think that you may retire with the honors of the field before you endanger them in another sortie."

"So I will, but without striking colors to a fear. Only one more walnut. This is Chief Justice Trott," she finished as she deposited the shivered nut, a mass of decayed kernel, in her plate.

Again the four men looked at the girl in amaze, and at each other curiously.

"You must set a guard upon your lips. You are far too frivolous, Damaris; it is not seemly for maidens to discuss those of high estate," spoke the Governor gravely.

"Not even the Lords Proprietors?" she asked archly.

"Even so."

"Then will I be the only one in the Province deprived of so mischievous subject of conversation. Beware, your Excellency, discrimination is the soul of misrule. Good-by, most unnatural parent, I leave you to your wine and your discriminations. Gentlemen, I will bid you good-day; flowers flourish not with your rank Virginia weed." And she took a rose from her dress and waved it in graceful farewell.



Mr. Yonge drew back her chair, the four men stood and bowed as she passed out.

"The sweetness of all flowers goes with you, Mistress Damaris—so speaks Mr. Skrine through my unworthy lips, being himself restrained by modesty," said Mr. Yonge gaily, while Mr. Skrine colored redder than her rose, Captain Maynard glowered furiously and the Governor smiled indulgently.

"Which self-same modesty has never been guilty of restraining Mr. Yonge," laughed Damaris, and her laughter came back to them like the rippling morning songs of birds.

Mr. Yonge leaned over and lifted up the plate with its fragments of unsound nut.

"We have a Cassandra in our midst," he said slowly.

"God forbid!" spoke the Governor sadly, and turned to the window his troubled eyes.

"The devil helps his own and the Chief Justice is in a fair way to undo us, thereon stake I my last guinea," spoke Francis Yonge bitterly.

"Nay, friend Francis, it cannot be so bad, but good men can better it in time. The Justice is but one man after all, and there be some of staunch temper in the Province, and should truth grow where suspicion now sows these will testify to the Proprietors of the mischievous character of this man, and pray them remove him," urged Mr. Skrine.

"And to what purpose, I pray you? So ready are they to listen to the voice of the people, so gracious are they when we call upon them for the

protection to which we are entitled!" said Mr. Yonge scornfully.

"Nay, gentlemen," spoke the Governor, lifting his hand with commanding gesture, "I pray you be more guarded. I charge you hold faith with the Proprietors. When a man comes to the point of reviling his benefactors the heavens are not clean in his sight. Suppose that we adjourn to the piazza with our pipes; it is cooler there."

## CHAPTER V

### THE WORDS OF THE WISE

" 'Tis a playing day I see."

—*Merry Wives of Windsor.*

"The worst fault you have is to be in love."

—*As You Like It.*

"So, Mistress Damaris, you have come at last! How came you to know that I had made requisition upon the Governor for a company of horse to fetch you? Nay, child, don't kiss me. I never could a-bear to be kissed by unbearded lips. The only woman ever kissed me was my nurse, and she was bearded like a trooper. My mother couldn't abide me because I looked like my father. All the beauty in the family came from my father's side. 'Tis half a year of Lammas Tides since you have set foot across my threshold. Troth, did you think I had a murrain or a plague of pox? Thrice I have invited you to dine, twice to sup, and again to go abroad in my coach. Now what have you got to say for yourself?"

"A great deal," answered Damaris, laughing. "But, and it please your Ladyship, I would prefer to hear what you have got to say for yourself. It were vastly more entertaining, facts are so depressing."

"Saucy baggage," answered the old lady, cackling. "I'll warrant that your tongue is a highway to success."

"A byway," laughed Damaris, "when honest ways fail."

"By the same I know that you have been wasting your time upon men. Such knowledge comes from commerce with fools. Truth died when Adam was born."

"It was born again in Eve," laughed Damaris.

"It does not bear a charmed existence, and it is just as well. Truth has a shocking way of wearing its dirty linen outside. To be truly well-bred, you must not know truth from falsehood. Keep them both ready to hand, and use them impartially as the occasion demands. Tell me what you have been doing, child, and mind you tell me no lies."

"I thought that I was to be well-bred."

"Only with men and with other women. I am sufficiently well-bred for us both. Now tell me all that you have been doing. No, don't tell me about the sweetmeats and cordials you have made. I hate domestic women, they always smell of dish-cloths. The Lord ordained social distinctions to save ladies from domestic drudgery, and child-bearing is only respectable when there is an entail to be considered. Ring for James, child, we will have a dish of tea. There is nothing so productive of tale-telling and scandal as a good cup of tea. I have never seen the woman whose secret I could not unlock with a judicious administration of the brew."

"But, your Ladyship, I have no secrets," said Damaris.

"I never saw a woman who had! They all belong to the men. Strange how many women keep from

them. Don't talk while you drink the first cup, or the charm won't work."

Damaris smiled as she drank her tea in the porcelain cup that came with it over seas, her interlocutor doing the same, save that she drank three cups to Damaris's one. She was a strange old lady, with manners nearer French than perfect. Indeed, she looked as though she had just stepped out of Louis's salon after having come off first best with the witty Duke—in truth, she had there passed many years of her life. Her dark eyes, set close together, were black and piercing; her nose hooked, her lips thin and straight over her sharp white teeth. The cynical old heart still pumped up its last drops to the lips and cheeks, which showed red under the rouge; her hair was high piled and always in powder, her garments were rich, her lace costly, jewels profuse; in her face, that indescribable look that dwells in the faces of those who have seen much of men and courts; the crowning vanity of the old lady, the shapely foot in its little shoe, red-heeled and dainty, buckled with diamonds, stretched out on its footstool well in sight, come men or come women.

The room, panelled in mahogany wood brought from the West India Islands, rich in the costly furnishings of England and France, made a fitting setting for Lady Kildare, herself the product of the polish and fashion of two courts, worldly-wise with the knowledge that comes from association with the wits and the libertines of the age.

Lady Kildare put down her cup and tapped on the floor to command Damaris's attention, for with her

eyes fixed on a portrait by Kneller she sat lost in thought.

"Now, Mistress Damaris, what is this that I do hear about your carryings on with that man of the woods, Captain Maynard.

"Truly, your Ladyship, with the most prodigious ingenuity in the world I could not divine the gossip of the town," answered Damaris calmly, nor was there so much as the pretense of a blush under the nodding white plumes of her bewitching bonnet.

"No airy subterfuge, if you please, young lady," sharply spoke Lady Kildare. "I am told upon the best authority."

"They say—" interjected Damaris archly.

"Don't interrupt, it's rude!" snapped her Ladyship. "It is passing plain that you need to go to London to have your manners mended. You are shockingly provincial!"

"It is better to be wicked than provincial, I suppose," said the girl innocently.

"Certainly it is; everybody in good society is wicked, only we follow the fashion and do not call each other names. To be good is to be an offense to your neighbor. Piety is only pardonable in parsons, and with them it is a paid calling with usurious interest beyond the grave. But to go back to Captain Maynard —"

"You seem to be fond of him," spoke Damaris innocently.

"Fond of him! Certes I am—as fond of him as I am of parsons and old women and babies; but I

mean to see that you are not foolish enough to grow fond of him."

"How will you manage, send me over to the tower?"

"That's a good idea. You are not such a fool after all, child; only it will be him for whom I will provide that opportunity for meditation and prayer."

"How will you arrange it?"

"In politics all things can be arranged. There is nothing in earth nor hell that can withstand them."

"Should you shut him up in the Tower I would be sure to love him, it would be so romantic."

"And I believe that you would, too," replied the old lady, eyeing her sharply. "There was ever a screw loose in you Johnsons; I needs must find some other way."

"What makes you think that you need to put him out of the way? There are other genteel men in the Province."

"Certes there are, and vastly more genteel. Now there is Francis Yonge—"

"I adore Mr. Francis Yonge!"

"No, you don't neither, Miss, or you wouldn't be so glib to own it. Now he would make you a good husband."

"But I don't want a good husband."

"You don't deserve one, flying in the face of Providence as you do! Now, Mr. Yonge has money, wit, position and everything that a woman could desire; he would take you to London and present you at court."

"There would I be a monstrous failure on account of my goodness."

"No, you wouldn't neither; besides, you would soon become qualified—half the gallants in town would be dancing attendance."

"Pleasant for Mr. Francis Yonge."

"Not so mighty pleasant neither, but what a man must expect who marries a pretty woman."

"Then should there be premium upon ugly wives?"

"No such thing! A man only values what he is afraid of, only loves what everybody else is trying to take from him."

"Yet would you consign me to one of these monsters."

"It is the best thing that you can do under the present imperfect earthly conditions; you can't be an old maid, it isn't genteel. England's Virgin Queen is the blackest spot on her 'scutcheon."

"All the saints were single."

"Frumps, all of them! A woman only turns to religion when society turns its back on her. Now be an amiable child and promise your wise old friend that you won't marry Captain Maynard, and I'll tell you about the rout I am going to give."

"Will there be dancing?"

"Certainly; I haven't gone over to the Dissenters! But not another word until you give me your promise."

"Too bad! I am dying to hear about the ball. I do not suppose that I will even be invited."



"Promise; it were a shame not to air that new gown just over from London."

"Truly it would. 'Tis a love of a gown and passing weary of retirement."

"Promise."

"Promise," repeated Damaris, laughing heartily. "What were my promise worth and it behooved me to break it. Promises made under compulsion are no more binding than swallow flights. Methinks your friend Captain Maynard would be vastly amazed at your serious consideration of his position. I never make promises. The last I made was not to touch the new English strawberries. I found it so hard to keep that I have never made another."

"You are a hopeless and impertinent baggage! Don't flirt till you are married, Damaris; it isn't safe. Marriage is the palladium of a woman's liberty!"

"Good-by, your Ladyship. You will tell me about the ball the day after and save me some of the comfits, and you love me!"

"Be sure you wear the new gown—Mr. Yonge will be here."

"And others."

"Saucy minx, be off with you and remember what I say! Never an invitation should Tomahawk receive, and it were not that I would offend Robert Johnson. One must stand well with the powers that be."

In the doorway Damaris paused and kissed her fingers lightly to the indomitable old lady leaning upon her cane, then the bright face a-shine with

laughter and the slight form all cloudy white in its soft draperies were swallowed up in the shadows of the great dusky hall.

Within, the shrunken form collapsed in its chair. The curtain was down. "Youth, beautiful youth!" she muttered. "All before it, nothing behind! The rustle of angel wings over its head, never a ghost in its chamber! A plague upon that idle lout, why tarries he with the lights? Twilight breeds ghosts as a cheese maggots. James, see that you are not again so late with the candles. I hate darkness, I am affrighted of mice! Bring me a petite verre of cognac, the darkness has made me chill. Harkye, no water; it spoils the flavor."

## CHAPTER VI

### WILFUL WOMAN

"Oh, waly, waly, but love is bonnie  
A little time while it is new;  
But when 'tis auld it waxeth cauld,  
And fades awa' like the morning dew."

—*Anon.*

Everywhere above and below, among greenery and flowers, wax lights burned with starry softness, the pale green candles of the Province giving forth the faint sweet smell of myrtle berries.

Everywhere roses, orange-blossoms and all manner of vivid bloom.

Everywhere women, men, laughter and music; the soft sighing of silken robes as they trailed over the floor; the rustle of fans as they breasted the air; the throb of the air that seems to quiver with subtle, sensuous passion when there is music and laughter, men, women and wine.

Upon the landing of the stairway stood Damaris in the gown that had come from London in the good ship the *Queen's Rose*. Soft and shining it fell about her; lillies of gold were broidered upon it, and more it resembled a fleecy cloud that floats o'er the bright face of the moon than earthly fabric, and Damaris herself never before so radiant, the chang-

ing lights in her face as beautiful as those of the opals in the necklace.

She stood with her arm slipped lightly into that of the Governor, himself resplendent in pearl-colored velvet and satin and lace, and as they paused there upon the landing, looking down upon the brilliant scene, many eyes were raised in admiration of the goodly pair.

"Welcome, your Excellency; we find ourselves truly honored by your presence!" Lady Kildare swept him the courtesy of King Louis's salon as she spoke. The Governor bowed low over her hand, saluting it. "So, Mistress Impudence, you come late that your charms may be heightened by expectation. Nay, but you have wasted your time, seeing that your beauty needs no aid this evening. Waste no more time talking to an old woman, and mind you waste it not in talking to Tomahawk, either. Harkye, I have my eye upon you! There they come, the noble army of martyrs, eager for the sacrifice. Yes, Mr. Yonge, she has promised to dance the first set with you, and my blessing goes with you. Be sure that you dance vis-a-vis to Mistress Dorothy Bowers, so she will be shined down. I can't a-bear her airs and graces. A poor enough breed the Bowers of Shropshire, a most indifferent mixture of psalm-singing and license; and 'pon my honor, she looks like a frump in that yellow gown."

Damaris glanced across at the lady in question, a handsome brunette, resplendent in yellow brocade, her rival belle in the Province, presumably also her rival in the affections of Captain Maynard.

"I think her rarely beautiful this evening," she said amiably.

"Nonsense, you think nothing of the sort! When I was a handsome young woman myself. I never saw anything handsome outside of my own mirror, and women have ever been the same since Sarah of the Israelites had herself boxed up before going into Egypt, because she thought herself so much more beautiful than the idolatrous women. Don't be a prig, Mistress Damaris!"

"It is not every one who can be a wit, your Ladyship," said Damaris, courtesying deeply.

"You don't need to flatter me, child, I am not your enemy."

"To flatter one's neighbor is the first Christian virtue," suggested Mr. Yonge.

"Then among Christians are you easily first, Mr. Yonge, if indeed one virtue can make a Christian," replied Lady Kildare.

"It takes but one virtue to make a martyr, your Ladyship."

"And that?"

"Constancy!" he replied, looking languishingly at Damaris, while Lady Kildare chuckled gleefully and said:

"Were your wit equalled by your constancy, be-shrew me, you had not languished thus long for the fair."

"Nor the fair have languished thus long for him," said Damaris mockingly, whereupon Lady Kildare continued to chuckle. Mr. Skrine laughed delightedly, the Governor smiled, but the countenance of the

great Indian Captain was as impassive as that of his braves. Mr. Yonge, who possessed the rare talent of never being defeated, smiled in mock despair, and bowing with hand on heart answered gallantly:

"Truly, I am honored, Mistress Damaris, that you stoop to use my heart even as a plaything. That it dwells thus long in your keeping makes it a worthier thing."

"Nay, Mr. Yonge," she replied, "'tis but a shuttlecock that I battled in passing, since 'tis ever on the wing."

"So also is Cupid."

"And like Cupid, a wanderer!"

"Heigho, were there ever such wits outside of Buttons, or those of Nell Gwynn and my Lord Sedley," interrupted Lady Kildare, whose dominant spirit might not longer submit to being in the background, albeit a delighted listener. "A truce to wit, Mistress Damaris. Wit is first cousin to misanthropy and the sting of old age is wisdom; love is the lord of youth, and the dance is the measure of its folly. Away with you, I would fain see if your feet are as nimble as your tongue! Gentlemen, to the breach!"

Three devoted heads bowed low, three hands pressed the sometime habitation of affection.

Damaris bowed low, around her rippled the foamy waves of her sheeny garments like the murmur of the summer sea. Within her line of vision three pairs of goodly calves in all their silken bravery of crimson, azure and peach-color. Damaris's heart was all a-gee, but she emptied her eyes of laughter

and to the three pairs of anxious eyes was lifted a countenance passing demure. Lady Kildare fidgeted in silence, her indomitable will essaying to bind the girl's choice; the Governor smiled to think that she was fairly caught in the snare of the fowler.

"Gentlemen," she said, smiling impartially upon them, "in my heart I find it easy to pardon you the zeal that makes you forget that the Governor takes precedence. *Au revoir!*" she slipped her arm into that of the Governor and walked calmly away.

The old schemer, "who could not take her tea without a stratagem," gasped, undone. The three men laughed foolishly. "Fore God, gentlemen," she stormed, "why stand you there like gibbering idiots! Shame upon you to be flouted by a maid! Methought I was bidding gallants, not milk-sops, to my feast."

There was no meeting Lady Kildare's wrath with weapons merely human. The three rejected partners bowed and moved away in inglorious silence.

Lady Kildare dropped down into her chair in impotent rage, her brocade crackling with anger, her jewels flashing scorn. "Fore the Lord Harry, to be outwitted by a girl, an impudent jade, scarce out of pinafores!" she raged inwardly. "Provincial bred at that! Faugh! I wonder if I am growing old?" She glanced nervously at her bejewelled hands, musk-scented. "One isn't old as long as one ignores it. Age is a courtier and waits in the ante-chamber," she said and buried her hands in the ruffles of her sleeves. A kinder look came slowly into the shrewd old eyes. "After all, it was right cleverly done. I could not have done it better myself in my youth.

By the Lord Harry, the girl has wit. She ought to be French and the wife of the king, then would she hold her own right bravely with the favorites, and the monarchs would become almost moral. Not so very bad, neither, since Tomahawk has a softer head than Francis Yonge and will be longer in the mending." Lady Kildare nodded her be-plumed head sagaciously and cackled in wicked glee as she rose to meet the Governor, who approached. And so wore the night on, in music and in laughter, in love and in scheming.

The ways of the transgressor are not always hard. Damaris, every nerve a-tingle with delicious excitement, leaned against the jessamine-twined pillar, the light of the full moon glorifying her flushed face. Before her Mr. Jonathan Skrine, his well-muscled heart in his well-rounded bosom, pumping up into his well-regulated brain so many wild ideas that it was well-nigh a-bursting with its new experience.

Damaris's bare hand lay upon the balustrade within easy reach; the new man in Jonathan Skrine reached out and lifted the dainty fingers.

"Oh!" cried Damaris, as though she were hurt.

"Oh!" cried Mr. Skrine, as though he were more hurt still.

Damaris stood in angry amazement. Mr. Skrine, his face the picture of despair, shifted uneasily from foot to foot as though the hurt came through his varnished boots.

"I crave your pardon," he cried in genuine contrition. "I beg a thousand pardons," he said pitifully. "I never did such a thing before in my life.



I do not know why I did it—it just looked so delicious,” he ended lamely.

“But it isn’t delicious; it is just plain, ordinary clay.” Damaris smiled as she held up her hand, surveying it critically.

“I can never forgive myself,” he pleaded abjectly. “Rather would I die a thousand times than be disrespectful to you.”

“Truly I believe you, Mr. Skrine,” said Damaris kindly.

“For a moment you did but think that I was Lady Kildare. When we are both seventy it won’t be any harm because then we won’t care about it.”

“You are generosity itself. That I should have ever appeared to be disrespectful to you is the grief of my life. There is something amiss with me. A sort of lightness here.” He touched his head pathetically.

“It is the heat, Mr. Skrine. I have not felt quite steady myself,” she spoke consolingly. “Think no more of it. I have forgotten it.”

For some moments Mr. Skrine was busied in swallowing a series of obstacles in his throat. He shifted uneasily from foot to foot and began in a tremulous voice:

“Again say I that you have the goodness of an angel. I would that I could tell you how great is my respect for you—nay, more than respect—but my tongue is a lame ass that halts overburdened. I do not look like a daring man, do I, Mistress Damaris?” She smiled pitifully in her heart as she regarded his moist face and unvalorous figure. “But I have dared do more than a braver man would do,

may—but I will not trouble you therewith. I am a dull man and little given to words. When others are talking they seem to forget me, and so it chances that I think to know where your choice will lie. You have seemed so happy, too, since the return of a certain one who shall be nameless, and permit me to say—”

“A thousand pardons, but may I claim this dance, Mistress Johnson?” spoke a tall man, suddenly appearing.

“Certainly, Colonel Parris. You will excuse me, Mr. Skrine.” And Damaris swept away. She smiled upon the pleasantries of Colonel Parris, laughed away his compliments, gave sally for sally, but every vein in her body was fired with mortification. That Lady Kildare should tax her with fondness for Captain Maynard amused her, for she always assumed that she had a fondness for every man in the Province whom she considered ineligible; but that kind, blundering Jonathan Skrine should have suspected it was as the poison of asps in her blood, and with the unreason of a woman who balances herself upon the fatal brink, the whole tide of her anger, at flood, set toward the unoffending Captain. Had he a guardian angel it should straitly have warned him to be gone; but guardian angels, being addicted to tabret and harp, are often unmindful of mundane obligations.

A little later the minuet being ended, Damaris stood somewhat apart, while Colonel Parris sought her mislaid fan. Captain Maynard was quickly at her side. He did not look aglow with festivity; rather there was in his eyes the look of a man who

has watched the lights burn out while others danced.

"The next dance is mine," he said with conviction made emphatic by jealousy, which is sharper than a serpent's tooth.

"I have already danced with you," she answered coolly.

"So have you also three times with Mr. Yonge."

"Methinks you have set yourself to spy upon that which concerns you not," she flashed angrily.

"You are mistaken; it concerns me greatly; it concerns me also that you choose not your words with greater nicety."

"If my words please you not it were easy to dispense with them."

"Are you seeking to make a quarrel, Damaris?"

"I seek only to free myself from unwarrantable surveillance."

"I do not consider it unwarrantable that after what has recently passed between us I should object to your making yourself the gossip of the town with your vain coquetries with Mr. Yonge."

"To begin with, I will say that I see nothing in what has passed between us to justify you in any claims upon me, nor rights to criticise my conduct."

"Does it mean nothing to you, then?"

"What, the idleness of a spring morning? A woman's life holds many such. Truly, Captain Maynard, you have dwelled so long in savage tents that you seem to have become unlettered in the fashion of society."

Across the room Colonel Parris and Mr. Yonge were hurrying toward them, the first bars of the next dance were scraping from tightening violin strings.

Captain Maynard forced down the anger within him. He looked steadily into Damaris's reckless eyes and spoke with the quiet tenseness of controlled passion:

"I cannot understand you. I hope that you are but playing in wilful mood. If you keep your promise and dance this next with me it is well; otherwise—"

"Otherwise you will understand as I wish you to do."

"So I will."

The two measured each other. Damaris's eyes were angry and baffling; those of the Captain could have consumed her with rage.

"I hold it a great misfortune that the quest of this has detained me so long time from you." And Colonel Parris, a tall, dark gentleman, bowed as he presented the recovered fan.

"And it is my good fortune that this set belongs to me," said Mr. Yonge.

"Troth, it should be my compensation for recovering the fan," urged Colonel Parris.

"And my memory plays me not false, both of these gentlemen must find their compensation elsewhere, seeing this set has been promised to me," spoke Captain Maynard with deadly quiet.

There was a brief moment's pause. Damaris held the three suitors in survey, then she spoke lightly as she looked daringly at Captain Maynard.

"What an embarrassment of riches! And my memory plays me not false, the dance belongs to Mr. Yonge." She laid her hand upon his extended arm, the other two gentlemen bowed, and the couple moved away to their place in the dance.

"By the Lord Harry, Tomahawk has come a cropper on the homestretch!" cried Lady Kildare, who, wicked old schemer that she was, had scented the danger from afar and rejoiced in the Captain's suspected discomfiture.

"I beg your pardon, your Ladyship, I do not quite understand," spoke her companion, a large man of unctuous appearance, and eyes inclined to be shifty.

"No more should you, Justice Trott," chuckled the old lady. "Politics, not love-making, is your talent."

"I was not born a politician, Lady Kildare. I am the slave of circumstance," he answered sententiously.

Lady Kildare surveyed him critically. Not a line in the clever face, selfish, self-seeking, with its suggestion of psychic instincts, escaped her sharp old eyes.

"The slave of passion you might be, Justice, but the slave of circumstance, never." She spoke emphatically.

"In my youth I could not afford passion, it was too costly."

"There are passions that become lucrative with the years," she spoke significantly.

"It has been my misfortune not to know them. I have from my youth up been a man of many labors and few pleasures," he answered ponderously.

"Some there be who take their pleasures sadly," she replied mockingly. "Ah, Governor Johnson, we are charmed to have you join us. I have been dying for a little dish of political gossip and the Justice

disappoints me by telling me that he is only a politician by force of circumstance."

"The force of circumstance makes geniuses, Madam." The Governor bowed to the Justice.

"There is no denying that in the Province we are all geniuses and all courtiers," she chuckled. "But, prithee, tell me if my Lord Carteret has been long enough out of his cups to devise any assistance for the Province; but after all I doubt not that Justice Trott can give us fresher news therefrom," she said, turning her shrewd eyes upon him.

"And wherefore I, your Ladyship?" asked the Justice with heat.

"How should I know? The workings of justice are manifold in their reach," she answered coolly, while the Governor held his breath.

"In this present my Lady Kildare is as fully informed as to the Proprietors' intentions as am I, in common with the rest of the Province, since the sources of information are equal," he replied, regaining somewhat his unctuous equanimity.

"Truth," said Lady Kildare, seeming suddenly to have lost interest. "After all, you are far too practical a man to concern yourself with things that lie so far from your jurisdiction. What do you gentlemen say to a rubber of whist? Sir Hovenden Walker will make the fourth. The young folks are all a-love-making to their hearts' content, and there are several odd guineas burning my pocket."

"Very delighted to join your Ladyship," spoke the Governor with relief.

"Charmed to be at her Ladyship's service with my skill and my fortune," said Justice Trott with effusion.

"I hope that your gold-pieces may so prove," laughed Lady Kildare, and with her hand in the Governor's arm and her stick a-rat-tat-tatting on the polished floor she proceeded to the card-room, where several tables were already deep in ombre and whist.

The cards were over, the dances were ended, the last sleepy notes of the violins had yawned themselves into silence, the candles, fast coming to their last end, guttered to their death; the flowers that had adorned the finest rout of the year had grown faint with the long hours and drooped their dissipated heads, the last lingering guests said adieu.

Inside the air was thick with the breath of dead joys; outside it was all a-shiver with the grey ghost of the coming day.

The horses in the Governor's coach pawed restlessly, the coachman yawned on his box, the footman, curled up beside him, dreamed of his magnum of rum in the Jolly Sea Dog.

The Governor stood at the gate and patiently held it open; Damaris tarried upon the steps, while Mr. Yonge, with pleasure tempered with leisure, adjusted her wraps about her.

Captain Maynard, who had first been detained by a young lady whose admirers seemed limited, and afterwards by Lady Kildare in search of a mythical gold-piece, which she declared to have dropped, came upon them standing there. "Good-night!" he said, half pausing.

"Or rather a fair good-morrow," said Mr. Yonge.

"Nay, let it still be night," said Damaris, since 'tis the happiest of my life."

Captain Maynard passed on in silence. Mr. Yonge bent his passionate half-closed eyes upon Damaris, his hands resting heavily the while upon the clasp of her cloak which his halting fingers had been slow in fastening.

"May I take that as an omen?" he asked tenderly.

Damaris drew herself away with dignity and frowned.

"As a reminder that you are not in London, as an omen that you need be more careful in future," she said haughtily, and unassisted by him, ran down the steps.

Meanwhile, at the gate, the Governor said :

"Wait a moment, Maynard, and we will carry you as far as your door."

"Thanks, your Excellency, but I pray you excuse me. I need the walk after the close rooms."

The Governor scrutinized his face surprisedly.

"Anything wrong with the Yamassees?" he asked.

"Not to my knowledge. At last advices the tribes were quiet. Good-night."

"Good-night; look in to-morrow."

"If your Excellency desires." He quickly walked away.

Hard by in the Watch House the watch was crying: "Four hours of the morning! All is well! all is well!"



## CHAPTER VII

### THE COURAGE OF ANGER

"I see my hopes must wither in the bud,  
I see my favors are no lasting flower,  
I see that words will breathe no better good  
Than loss of time and lighting but at hours;  
Then when I see, then this I say therefore,  
That favors, hopes and words can blind no more."

Captain Maynard sat at the table in what had been the library of his father's house, but which had gradually become devoted to him and his belongings, all of the latter being visible upon walls and shelves betokening the warlike pursuits of the young soldier. Between the book-cases there hung tomahawks and strings of wampum, long-stemmed pipes, flint-headed spears, bows with arrows stone pointed, moccasins of deer skin, quivers curiously wrought in feathers and furs, a gorgeous match-coat brilliant with the plumage of scarlet tanager and parrakeet, racks of guns, swords and cutlasses, skins of otter, beaver and skunk, hunting knives, horns, antlers, maps of the Province, indeed a most various and motley collection of picturesque trophies. It was noon of the day following Lady Kildare's ball, from which disastrous festivity Maynard had hastened home, discarded with scorn his bravery of scarlet and lace and assumed garments more convenient for him. Then had he betaken himself along the water

front. With hasty strides he passed the Half Moon and the Court of Guard, before which the night watch was being relieved, and the last town patrol was slipping sleepily from his horse, yawning noisily the while. They both came to attention and saluted the Captain. He returned their greeting, passing on beyond Colonel Rhett's house to Rhett's bridge, where he kept a light Indian caique. Then with the rising sun spilling into the sea its gallons of fairy gold on the right, he pulled up through the brave swell of the Cooper right lustily, for his was one of those natures to whom physical exertion is the only relief under physical strain. Craven's Bastion, the last stronghold of the town, was soon left behind. The river was all his own save for the fluttering strings of water fowl flying over, or an occasional solitary Indian standing straight and paddling deftly across his caique, in which lay a good red deer, a basket of fish, or a bale of peltry.

It was not every man who would have hazarded himself alone on the river in those troubled days of the Province, but when love dwells in the heart prudence is a seldom guest. Maynard had never been so angry before in his life. His strongest feeling was one of resentment against the vain girl in whose power he had placed himself, and who had been pleased to treat his best as thistle-down, to be blown away with an idle breath. Anger there was too against the man who had supplanted him; against reason he accused him of using means unfair. Sorrow he had never known; the very conception thereof was incommensurable to him. What had come to him thus far was for the greater part anger;

that he understood. That is young and human, and the familiar spirit of the strong and self-willed. Like Jacob, he would wrestle with the angel, and like Jacob he would not know with whom he had wrestled until the dawn came. Well up the river he shipped his oars, stripped off his clothes, stood for a moment hands over head, firm and straight and sinewy as a savage, then dove he swiftly behind the drifting boat, cleaving the water into silver gashes with long, clean strokes. In and out of the water he flashed like a dolphin at play, then dexterously raised himself again, Indian fashion, into the frail craft, resumed his garments and rowed back to town. Muscles alive, body vigorous, nerves calm, he returned home, and at noon his father came upon him in the library studying his Indian charts as zealously as though he were that day to set forth to the wars. Indeed, his mind was quite decided to start upon the red man's trail, Proprietors or no Proprietors, money or no money, with soldiers or without them. In his own heart, at this present, there being enough savagery to make him equal in fury to twenty tribes of barbarians.

"Good-morning, my son," the hale voice of a hale man saluted him from the doorway.

"Good-morning, father." The younger man rose courteously, but his eyes were glued to three significant points where rested his sinewy fingers.

"Trouble with the Yamassees again?"

"There is ever trouble with such vermin."

"Starts an expedition against them?"

"Without money and without arms?"

"Have the Lords Proprietors made no response?"

“As much as any sensible man might expect after their shameful neglect. Never before were affairs so favorable for crushing the Indians and establishing ourselves. If we pass the time the opportunity is lost. Strife among themselves has divided their forces. There has likewise been a fatal plague of small-pox among them. Now we might fight them tribe by tribe, instead of having to do battle with a whole people.”

The older man drummed upon the table, his kindly blue eyes troubled. The younger returned to his study of the maps. After a little the father spoke:

“You are right, Martin; there is nothing to hope from the Proprietors. Had they a heart for us they could not have denied our petitions. We have appealed to them as men to men, as sons to fathers, but 'tis plain they have grown weary of their dream of empire over here, seeing it brought them no harvest of gold. What will come of it, we do not know. Negotiations will drag their tedious course. Between their cups and their gaming, their mistresses and their political intrigues, they have no leisure for us.”

“Then should they have no power over us.”

“True, but we cannot help ourselves; the hawk is hooded by the hunter.”

“It is infamous!”

“Mayhap, but hard words break no heads.”

There was another silence. The older man was gathering courage for something that lay very near his heart, trying to acquire therefor a diplomacy foreign to his bluff, downright nature.

"My son," he spoke directly, in a voice slightly uneasy. "*The Indian Emperor* sails for England to-morrow."

"Will she bring us monies?" asked his son bitterly.

"That doubt I greatly, but several goodly men of the Province sail with her."

"Will the Proprietors lend ear to them more than to those already gone before?"

"That know I not. One may tell by the tracks where a stag hath lain in his covert; one knows not whether he will run with the wind or against it."

"Beshrew me, this stag always runs with the wind of self-interest," replied the son, turning over his papers.

The father shifted uneasily in his chair, then with a mighty effort he cleared his throat and went straight to the mark.

"My son, I wish that you were of that company that sails for England to-morrow."

"I have no mind to see London with its follies and its vices. My duty and my inclination lie here," replied the son indifferently.

"You have kinsmen there whom it would rejoice me for you to know. Furthermore, travel broadens a man's mind and gives polish to his manners," argued the father. In his mind he thought of his childless elder brother and his goodly English acres, for with an Englishman's love of England it hurt him to think that they should pass from the direct line. The son knew well what was in his father's mind; full often the old arguments had been marshalled against him. He pulled out a drawer and fingered among the papers. He drew back as though

his fingers were burnt—they had touched upon a skein of scarlet silk that he had slipped from Damaris's work that day in the garden. Crushing it in a handful of papers, he stepped over to the fireplace and set tinder to it. In the daytime it is easier to be commonplace—we then do in a matter-of-fact manner those things which we contemplate at night as tragedies and surround with Delphic rites.

The old man flushed a little. It hurt him to think that his son should treat indifferently what meant so much to him. With a man's reasonable ambition for his son he wanted him to go back to the old country. He, in the hot blood of youth, had thrown in his fortunes with the Colony; with her he would hold, come what may; but with his son it were different. He felt himself responsible that his son had been born here; he held no sanguine view of the advancement of the Colony; he wanted his son to return to England and enjoy what might come to him.

The young man watched the last streaks of crimson and white turn to a blackening crispness, then he resumed his seat and the examination of his papers, seeing that he considered the matter closed with his father.

"My son, I have never asked anything of you before. You have given your manhood to the Province thus far. I would ask of you to spend a few months with my mother and my people, while things are at a standstill here, but it seems that a father has no claims."

Surprised at the note of pain in his father's voice, the Captain looked up quickly.

"I have never thought of your looking at it in that light, father," he replied gently. "I but considered it in the light of my duty to the Province, and my lack of inclination for the pleasures of city life, to which I have not been bred and for which I am unfitted."

"You are bred a gentleman, and a gentleman is fitted for all that becomes a gentleman," answered the father stoutly.

Captain Maynard stretched out his feet, the mud of the river bank still clinging to his shoes, thrust his hands to the bottom of his pockets and for the first time gave his father's proposition serious consideration. Yesterday he would not have regarded it for a moment, but life is a kaleidoscope—we look with joy upon the design that comes to us, with the turn of a hand the pieces shift, break up and change, a new combination is formed. All of his life heretofore, bred in the strenuous time of the Colony, duty had bounded his horizon; to-day expediency was setting a new heaven and a new earth. He seemed a new man to himself as he sat there turning over his father's proposition. That he should be considering it was a surprise to himself. He had not lived long enough to know how short a time it takes for a man to be born again. There is no fiercer fire than anger, no swifter crucible than love for a woman. He looked upon the life that lay before him in the Colony—it did not invite him. Therein could he never get beyond the smile of a woman's face, the sound of her laughter; also the little fortified town was all too narrow to hold Mr. Yonge and himself in the bonds of peace. He knew that his

father spoke truly when he declared that there was no speedy prospect of aid from the Board, nor expeditions against the Indians. He knew that the reasons he gave were good reasons to the father; why should they not be so to the son? There seemed to be something beyond in his father's thoughts but he found it too burdensome to exploit in his present mood.

And the father, sitting there in that pitiless helplessness that comes to fathers when they realize their lack of power over the sons of their flesh, wondered what the decision would be, and trembled to hear it. At last Captain Maynard raised his head; the brave old face opposite whitened a little.

"I will go, father, if it pleases you," he spoke simply.

Mr. Maynard sprang forward, his bluff face aglow, a suspicious shine in his kindly eyes.

"Fore the Lord, Martin, you are the right stuff; true Maynard to the marrow!" he cried warmly, wringing his son's hand energetically. And even as his father thanked him, his son felt himself to be a smaller man.

"And your Uncle Walter is a man of influence in his shire, and a friend of Lord Cantrey, who is neck and neck with Lord George Berkeley; and who knows but that he may do you some service in bringing you to the Proprietors?"

"Yes, father."

"And now you must quick to the Governor and ask a furlough."

"I will send him a letter straightway."



“Egad! too busy to bid Mistress Damaris farewell? Zounds! but you are a slashing blade and a chip of the old block. You will hold your pace with the best of them. Marry, you catch the London fever fast. And a wise lad you are to burn your ships behind you, nor let any bright eyes stand between you and the beauties of St. James,” he chuckled gayly. “Don’t be looking into the eyes of Nelly Gwynn’s ilk, though; such are the pits of hell. Young blood must have its fling, boy, but fling like a gentleman.”

“I will try to live as you have taught me, an honest gentleman,” replied the young man quietly as he sorted his papers.

“And, Martin, when you are passing through King street stop at the Bell Tavern and make yourself known to the great Dean. He consorts there with the heads of the Tories and is a man of most enjoyable conversation. And be sure you look in at the Bull’s Head and Wills and Buttons, and a right jolly company of blades you will find, and a fair genteel sprinkling of wits—Mr. Steele and Mr. Addison, as well as those of smallish fame but ripe conversation.”

“As you say, father,” assented his son gravely, affixing the while a seal upon a packet of papers addressed to His Excellency Gov. Robert Johnson.

“And as to clothes, boy, just carry your warm sea-togs. When you reach London you won’t want provincial fashions; egad, you must ruffle with the best. And damme, my boy, I have not been so happy since I left the old home myself. Your grandam will be wanting to take you upon her knee. Take her a tomahawk and show her the sort of toy

you have cut your teeth upon. We'll have up a bottle of brandy and drink to your voyage; damme, we won't drink it in nigger rum. Fore God, here comes the Governor himself; 'tis well chanced; you will be spared the writing. I will go to the gate to greet him."

Bustling with excitement, voluble with pleasure, he rushed forth.

Martin Maynard sprang to his feet and stood with his hands resting heavily upon the back of a chair. For ten minutes stood he thus, while from the porch beyond came the eager, hearty tones of his father and the occasional quiet speech of the Governor. When the two elders entered the room the young man moved slowly a step forward, the Governor looking squarely into his eyes.

"So, Captain Maynard, your father informs me that you have made a sudden decision to go to London," he spoke coldly.

"Subject always to the pleasure of your Excellency," he answered quietly.

Again the Governor looked at him sharply, then he stepped forward, rested his hand upon his shoulder and spoke gently:

"Go and God speed, my boy. It were better so."

"I knew that his Excellency would approve," cried the father delightedly. The son reached out his hand to the Governor and said not a word.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THOSE THAT GO DOWN IN SHIPS

"You must not think  
That we are made of stuff so flat and dull  
That we can let our beard be shook with danger  
And think it pastime."

—*Hamlet.*

The good ship *The Indian Emperor*, commanded by Capt. Robert Clarke, as able a seaman and genial host as ever stepped the deck of a merchantman, slipped her moorings at the pier just at sunset, and with all sails set dropped down with the tide to the Bar. There came she to anchor, and with sail-wings folded, rocked herself softly to sleep in the white moonlight, awaiting the dawn and the flood-tide to begin her journey across the trackless sea.

In her hold she carried the wealth of the Province, pitch, tar, staves, lumber, peltry and rice. In her cabin some of the gentry of the Colony, among them Mr. Samuel Wragg, worthy councilor, and Captain Maynard, of noteworthy fame in the wars with the natives. A black silence rose the great hulk above the water line, little waves lisped a strange language about her English keel. The step of the watch broke the quiet of her deserted decks, his only companion in the waste of water and sky the light from

the quaint watch-tower which glimmered faintly through the darkness like a star close to setting.

So lay the peaceful night upon the bay and upon the town, but with the day a great terror came. As calm as yester-eve lay city and offing. Eight ships stood about the Cooper water front on eve of departure. On the wharves a scene busy and picturesque. Laughing negroes, gay-turbaned, rings in their ears, bodies and limbs bare, trundled their barrows to and fro. Indians sleek, swift-footed, sinister, moved quickly along with packs of peltry upon their bare, mahogany shoulders, their chests tattooed in blue and white, their lithe limbs moving straitly under their body-cloths of fringed deer-skin or trousers of cotton. A bearded Custom House official, in the scarlet and gold of the King's service, swore roundly at a crestfallen Dutch skipper whose papers he held. A West Indian mulatress in striped cotton of indigo and white, her stately bust and shoulders bare and smooth as bronze, chattered eagerly with a sailor over a basket of dewy berries. A half-drunken sailor made his way by short tacks among the piles of mahogany lumber from the New Indies. Everywhere the mild air was pungent with produce—the clean, wholesome smell of rosin and tar from the barrels on the wharf, the sharp tang of molasses as it oozed from its casks in the sunshine, the breath of the puncheons of rum, the mellow aroma of Madeira just unloaded from a privateer, and bales of hides ill smelling. Farther on clean barrels of rice, packages of indigo, bundles of palmetto brooms, and cases of candles made of myrtle berries, the rollicking song of an Irishman aloft in

the rigging, a brawny Scot slopping off the deck, the oaths of a tar sleeping off his potations soused by the Scot with a pailful of salt water, the rattle of chains, the creaking of cordage, the flapping of drying sails, the wail of a child in the arms of a sad-eyed woman gazing seaward from the pier head, two sailors quarreling over a game of dice behind a bale of goods, an idle guard astride of a cask, smoking a long-stemmed pipe.

Suddenly the idle guard, who seemed to see nothing, shaded his eyes with his hand and gazed intently seaward. There a small craft ran in ahead of the wind. She seemed a ship's long-boat carrying a sail, in her more than a full crew of men, bearded and uncouth. Among them, as the boat ran her nose into the wharf, the guard recognized Mr. Marks, a resident of the town, who had yesterday set sail in *The Indian Emperor*. His heart rose to his mouth, he flung down his pipe and ran forward. "Not so fast, my hearties!" he cried as they would make fast a rope. Whereupon Mr. Marks, urged thereto by his strange and swarthy companions, called out, "Let us land, Sergeant Mays; then shall you know what this signifies."

Mr. Marks stepped first upon shore, after him as ugly a band of ruffians as ever shamed God's clean blue sea.

"Pirates!" the cry went on from mouth to mouth, gaining in terror. The busy groups broke up, idlers grew alert. There was hurrying and scurrying hither and thither, agony and alarm. From the Watch House the ready bell clanged forth the loud-voiced terror above the peaceful town.

"*The Indian Emperor* has been taken prisoner. Some of the villains come hither with a proposition to the Council," said Mr. Marks, in his voice concentrated anger and shame. He looked scornfully at the swarthy robbers, who smiled in their beards and spat contemptuously upon the earth.

Gay enough were the ruffians in stolen booty, costly store from English merchantmen and Spanish galleon. Richly as courtiers were they attired in frock coats of brocades and breeches of satin; across their breasts silken sashes hung with pistols; two good broad-swords wore they each, and plumed hats dangled their limp feathers about their lawless heads.

The crowd fell back as it does to allow the passing of a gallows cart, and through it they swaggered; Mr. Marks, their unwilling guide, looks of deadly hatred and imprecations pursuing them. With arrogant bravado they walked through the town, leering upon the excited crowds, laughing loudly at the tumult of pealing bells, clanking swords, the haste of flying feet and the hoarse cries that passed on from voice to voice the story of their coming, told with the varying exaggerations of excitement and terror. Soldiers flocked toward the Guard House, buckling on their accoutrements as they ran; here and there an officer of the Guard galloped by in scarlet uniform; a worthy councilor, hatless, pulled on his coat as he rushed into the street; there was a slamming of gates and a barring of doors; and between indrawn blinds women peered out curiously into the street, the while they held their breath with terror. Into the library, where the Governor sat

writing, Damaris rushed, crying excitedly, "Father!" "Yes," he answered, without raising his eyes. She was not altogether in favor at this present, seeing that he cherished a resentment against her since he had seen the brave young Captain with his calm assumption of indifference.

"Father!" she cried, putting her arm about his shoulder, and this time something in her tone aroused him. Looking up he saw her terrified face and lips that trembled, but before she could speak a coast guard, who had followed fast upon her, cried breathlessly:

"Pirates, your Excellency! Pirates abroad in the town! Pirates have taken *The Indian Emperor*, and even now we are in their hands!"

"Bring you truth or rumor?" asked the Governor, jumping to his feet and reaching for his sword.

"Truth, your Excellency, by our Lord! Hearken to the bells and the tumult. Even now ten of the villains are come into town, bringing with them Mr. Marks, also a proposition for the Council."

"The daring robbers; they shall pay with their lives for this outrage," cried the Governor, his face burning with anger, as he secured his pistols with steady hands. "Come!" he called, starting forward; "we will hang them higher than their own yard-arms and leave them to the fowls of the air."

"Let me go with you, father," pleaded Damaris, who had taken down a pistol and was running beside him.

"You are mad, child; this is no time for women!"

"Father!"

"Hinder me not, Damaris; remain quietly within."

"Do you think that the worst is true?"

"God forbid! I will send you tidings straightway should there be more to learn."

She had come to the gate clinging to his arm. He loosened her hands and kissed her, saying:

"Remember, you come of a soldierly race, my daughter."

"Yes, father, I will remember, but waiting is harder than fighting."

"Sergeant McLeod," spoke the Governor to one who awaited him at the gate, "I leave you in command here. See to it that no one passes within or without these gates."

"Verra good, your Excellency."

The Governor swiftly rode away. A moment later the iron gates were barred, the inner doors of studded oak fast bolted.

With flying feet Damaris entered the house and climbed the stairways to the attic, the last flight dark and crooked and narrow. Through rubbish and cob-webs she crept, half stooping, to a bull's-eye window that overlooked the city and the sea. Below it lay the town, up to her rose its faint, disturbed murmur; but of what transpired she could see little because of the clustering trees. Seaward she looked with straining eyes, but calm it lay in sunny peace, giving no token of deeds of bloodshed in the offing.

Down to the garden again she hurried and during the next two hours of suspense, like a bird beating against its prison bars, she fluttered round and round the walls seeking egress. Desperate at last with anxiety, she donned bonnet and mantle, then with



a fine assumption of authority she came to Sergeant McLeod.

"Open, Sergeant!" she spoke commandingly. The grizzled Scot regarded her quizzically from under his shaggy brows. In his Gælic soul were two Sassenach idols enthroned—the Governor and his daughter. How to hold faith with the one and favor the other was a knotty problem.

"The Mistress would na be asking what I would be verra sorry to deny her," he spoke softly.

"I must pass through!" she spoke peremptorily.

"Nae, Mistress, ye would na be sae heartless as to require me to do that verra same thing that would make the Governor kilt me up in a tow. My mither always told me I had a lang craig for the gibbet."

"I must go into the town!"

"I wot weel there be many callants there, Mistress, as would gie their lives for a glint o' your bonny een, but the town is full of corbies and reiving villains, and it would na be so verra agreeable to your constitution."

"Open, Sergeant!"

"Ochon, that I suld deny a lady's request is sair greeting to my hieland soul. I am a puir body and come of an unchancey generation."

"But you will not deny me, Sergeant McLeod, when I tell you that for my life's happiness I must pass," she pleaded.

"A verra pretty hieland chiel I suld look, kilted up in a tow, the hoodie crows making free with my constitution," he replied impassively, gazing skyward.

"I will tell my father that I made you open," she pleaded.

"I am a puir hieland body, Mistress, but my word is my ain to make or to break. I wadna let a lassie's kirtle stand atween me and my flogging. Never a man of the Clachan McLeod broke faith with his chief; but suld there be any other small thing ye suld be asking, sic as my life in any honorable cause what-effer, it is a small thing and I wadna stand a moment for my ain risk."

Damaris turned away, sighing hopelessly. Full well she realized that Ailsa Craig itself could not be more obdurate.

Meanwhile, in the high chamber, where the Council had been so hastily assembled, a very momentous scene was being enacted.

In his chair of state upon the dais sat the Governor; duly in their seats the Council of Seven, one member only being absent and that Mr. Samuel Wragg, now in the hands of the pirates. Before them stood Mr. Marks, a strong agitation possessing him.

In the light of the fair spring day that came streaming in through the open casements of the narrow, arched windows, the faces of the men showed angry and resolute. They were men of strenuous mould, not lightly to be trifled with.

"Speak, Mr. Marks; you have our permission to deliver your message," spoke the Governor. Standing, he towered above them; angry dispute ceased; silence fell upon the excited assembly; Mr. Marks stepped forth and told his story.

“It was the third watch of the morning, your Honor, when suddenly there came a cry, and out of the darkness a tumult arose. Rushing upon deck we found ourselves between two pirate ships, forty guns trained upon us. ‘Surrender!’ cried the pirates. ‘Never, as long as a man lives to fight!’ answered Captain Clarke. Straightway we armed and mustered our forces. Then it was that the pitifulness of our defense came upon us—we were but a handful of men against two ships packed with desperate villains, well armed. Even as we sought to arm ourselves, the robbers swarmed over our bulwarks with boarding-pikes, cutlasses and knives, overpowered us right speedily and put us into irons. The pirates proceeded to possess themselves of all monies, and of such provisions as came seasonable to their hands. Then, bethinking themselves that they stood in need of certain medicines which they could not procure from ports because of their nefarious practice, they fell upon the plan of sending up some of their number and demanding a chest of drugs to the value of four or five hundred pounds. Should your Excellency refuse these insolent demands, or offer violence to their emissaries, they threaten straightway to murder all of their prisoners, send up their heads to the Governor, and set fire to the ships. So stands the matter, your Excellency. At the Bar of Charles Town lies the good ship *Indian Emperor*, with the black flag flying at her mast-head; on either side lie the *Queen Anne’s Revenge*, of forty guns, manned by Black Beard himself, and the *Revenge*, under Richards; also hard by a sloop called the *Adventure*, commanded by one

Hands. Upon the *Queen Anne's Revenge* sails Stede Bonnet, also a company of as redoubtable villains as ever swung hanger, and in capture they hold several sloops and two junks taken hereabouts. So as your Honor will see, we were not in condition to make any reasonable defense, but must needs be penned up like swine. May every mother's curse of them speedily swing on good English hemp!"

"Amen, so be it!" echoed his angry hearers.

Discussion waxed excited and angry. Some were for sending the medicines with the greatest dispatch; others for withholding them, come what may, because of the insolence of the demand and the outrageous effrontery of the cut-throats who swaggered about the town with insulting bravado, while the hands that would have swung them high upon the gallows were tied because of regard for the prisoners.

The life of one man upon that vessel was of peculiar interest to three of that Council, and about him centered their thoughts most anxiously, and that the young Captain of Indian fame.

"Gentlemen," said the Governor, rising—and as always, at the sound of his voice the tumult subsided—"truly was never body of Councilors so hardly placed betwixt righteous revenge and duty to our fellow-townsmen. God help us to speak reasonably and to act wisely in the present sore strait. On the one hand stands the demand of a band of infamous robbers who prey upon our commerce and harry our land. The demand is an offense to our courage, an insult to our honor, a stench to our pride. On the other hand, should we refuse we have upon our heads the blood of our townsmen. To me there

is no choice. Revenge, injury and anger are but as the mists of the morning compared with the lives that are in danger. Shall we send the chests, gentlemen?"

"Never, while there is a sword-arm left in our midst!" cried one, springing to his feet and drawing his sword.

Then were the swords of all drawn, eyes flashed angrily, and men breathed heavily. Again above the tumult rose the Governor's voice, silently the swords were sheathed.

"Gentlemen," he asked, "is revenge more honorable than justice?"

There was a portentous silence, in which each man thought his own thoughts, yet dominated somewhat by the quiet power of the one calm man among them, they were gradually submitting to his just conclusion.

Francis Yonge drew out his snuff-box and took a pinch with hands that trembled a little, spilling the dust over his Mechlin ruffles. To him the tragedy within the Bar resolved itself into one face—that of his helpless rival; for whatever his gay insouciance and Mistress Damaris's moods, he did not lightly esteem the standing of that same rival. It would be easy to kindle anew the rightful passion of those assembled, to accomplish their righteous purpose, in the doing of which all the chances of Captain Maynard in love and war would be forever ended.

Jonathan Skrine thought also of the young Captain, thought of him as a man beloved by the one woman in the world whom he adored absolutely, and

so strengthened he himself in the resolve to act for her happiness.

Francis Yonge arose. There was a reckless look in his handsome face, feverish daring in his mocking eyes.

"By my oath, we will not submit to these insolent robbers!" he cried impetuously.

Into the slumbering mass he had flung the spark that reignited it. The angry, revengeful clamor broke out anew.

"'Noblesse oblige,' gentlemen," spoke the Governor quietly. He folded his arms and looked full into the eyes of Mr. Yonge, who, with sword drawn, incited his companions to their mad revenge.

For the moment Francis Yonge gave back the look with haughty daring, then his glance wavered and he shivered slightly. The moment after he had sprung upon the stand beside the Governor, and lowering his sword cried heartily:

"The Governor is right, gentlemen; we will stand beside his Excellency. Now stand we in the pirate's power, our revenge comes later. And it please your Excellency, I have a most proper knowledge of drugs. Will you appoint me your apothecary?" he ended with a light laugh.

The reaction took place, the tension was relaxed; a laugh, albeit a somewhat unmerry one, went round the hall.

"How have the mighty fallen!" groaned Mr. Skrine, but his face shone.

"Most gladly do I appoint you my Knight of the Burning Pestle, Mr. Yonge." There was deep feel-

ing in the Governor's voice. "To you I leave the matter."

"The Devil turned saint," replied Yonge, laughing lightly and avoiding the Governor's eye. "Mayhap I may mix a portion of poison in the healing drugs for the cut-throats!"

A few minutes sufficed to complete the arrangements. The chest of medicines was unanimously agreed upon, then the Council adjourned, for all were eager to be abroad to learn the pirates' movements.

Out of the hall beside Francis Yonge walked the Governor, with shining eyes and head uplifted.

"The Devil is dead," said Yonge airily, smiling upon Jonathan Skrine, who followed his friend with canine faithfulness, mopping his bland brow and saying devoutly:

"I never had the courage to be a man, but I know one when I see him, or I'm not a Dutchman, God be praised!"

"You are a psalm-singing Roundhead!" laughed Yonge.

In the open the Governor drew a deep breath.

"By my oath, the iron of this day has entered my soul!" he spoke bitterly. "But by the grace of God we have done nothing to be ashamed of!" His eyes rested kindly upon Francis Yonge.

"The Devil is dead," replied Yonge, with a quizzical smile. "But mayhap his son reigns in his stead!"

"The son of the Devil has no cloven hoofs!" replied the Governor significantly. "Good-morning, gentlemen; I will go down to the wharf and see if new tidings there may be gathered."

Francis Yonge stood watching his retreating figure with puzzled eyes, whistling softly. "What a fool he can make of a man," he said to himself. "Marry, I feel like a shriven saint!" Then he shook himself hard. "Come along, Schnapps, we will hie us away and measure the poison for our worthy sea-dogs."



## CHAPTER IX

### THE WING OF OCCASION

"Nay, certainly, I know the ways of women; they won't when thou wilt, and when thou won't they are passionately fond."

—*Terentius.*

The day wore on to sultry afternoon. Spent with anxiety and the sickening horror of a possible something, Damaris threw herself down exhausted upon a garden bench. Suddenly she shivered and sprang up; it was the same bench where she had sat with Captain Maynard those idle spring mornings. She felt as though she were sitting upon a coffin. She walked to the side of the garden that ran along the street. Against it grew an oleander; she tried it, but its drooping branches succumbed limply under her slight weight; next she tried to climb an orange tree, but the sharp thorns tore her cruelly; far down in the corner she spied a pomegranate—its limbs were brittle and ill disposed to yield her a foothold, but she managed to raise herself till her head was lifted above the wall, and there, retaining her position hardly, she remained scanning the street with straining eyes.

A long waiting, but never a passer-by. Then Damaris made a bold resolution and straightway proceeded to put it into execution. First she took

from her belt the pistol she had secured. She had not taken the precaution to observe that it was hammerless, and in its innocuous condition she deposited it gently upon the wall. Then from her waist she unwound a silken sash, one end of which she made fast to the pomegranate trunk. Upon the crest of the wall bristled the sharp inset of glass, which formed a cruel hindrance. Fertile in device, Damaris removed her shoe and with its red heel hammered zealously upon it. Suddenly she paused. Coming toward her with swaggering gait and insolent laugh were two grotesquely picturesque figures. A wild inspiration came to her in that moment of terror, while her heart fluttered like a bird in her breast.

"Gentlemen," she spoke softly.

The two men stopped, looked up, and stared in wonder when they saw the lovely face rising above the wall in its setting of scarlet blossoms.

"Gentlemen," she repeated softly.

"Gentlemen of fortune, Mistress, at your service," answered one of the knaves, and with an exaggeration of mock courtesy he swept the pavement with the plumes of his hat, the other following suit with a still more grotesque imitation.

"Gentlemen, do you come from the ships that hold the passengers of *The Indian Emperor*?"

"Since the Empress of Land-blossoms puts to us that delicate question, we will acknowledge that honor."

"Has any injury been done to the passengers?" asked Damaris steadily, the while she ignored the impertinence.

"Marry, you would have us betray the secrets of our house!" said the rogue. "There's honor among thieves, Mistress!"

"If that be so, tell me if harm be come to the men of this town?"

"Nay, Mistress, Empress of Delight, we have treated them even as spring lambs. We but folded them to keep them away from the wolves."

"Will harm come to them?"

"S'death, Mistress, how can a simple sailor, who scours the seas for his crust and sop, tell what the mind of the Governor will be?"

"What mean you?" she asked eagerly.

"A band of simple gentlemen who sail the seas for change of air find themselves troubled with cramps and shivering ague wherefor we have no physicks. Finding ourselves also without monies, we have but taken the liberty to detain a few men of the Province while we treat with the Governor for a chest of pills and possets."

Damaris drew a sigh of relief and ignored the eyes that ogled her. Were this same true, the passengers were safe.

"By God, a likely wench, Gascon; decent and friendly. Give me a toss of the foot and I'll tell you if she be as good as she seems," said the other pirate, nudging the spokesman and winking knowingly.

"Nail up your infernal liquor trap or I'll teach you how!" said his companion, fiercely.

"Will you, damn you!" said the other, whipping out a brace of pistols. "You ain't by yourself in this game. John Lats is never the man to pass by a pretty wench."

"Put up those irons or I'll teach you how when it's too late to practice. You won't have two sound bones to carry back in your cursed body to the *Revenge* if you don't treat this lady respectfully!" thundered Gascon. Something in his looks made his companion quail, but he grumbled surlily to himself as he returned his weapon.

Damaris, who had almost fallen from the tree in fright the moment before, looked gratefully at her champion, whose speech betrayed him to be of gentle origin.

Would you be so kind as to carry a message to one of the prisoners for me?" she asked timidly.

"Sweetheart?" asked the man, bowing knowingly.

"No, a friend of my father's," she answered, while her face glowed.

"S'death, Mistress, that is asking too much; can't bother my mind about a friend of your dad's.

Damaris hesitated weakly.

"Now were it a sweetheart," the man began mockingly, "I would do a good turn for a sweetheart—my own or somebody else's. I was always of tender mind toward lovers."

"Sweetheart, be it," said Damaris bravely.

"Then, gentle Mistress, I am yours till death!" He slapped his hand dramatically upon his heart.

"You will not fail me?" she asked, looking squarely into the reckless eyes.

“Not as long as a black flag flies over the seas, upon the three oaths of a pirate—gentleman, I should say, Mistress. One gains strange fashions of speech, sailing the seas. I had a yellow-haired lass once myself. Poor lass, I wasn’t what might be called a father to her—I found her dead in her garret. To quit my conscience of the yellow-haired lass I’ll take your love message.”

For a moment Damaris hesitated, then turning she broke a spray of pomegranate blossoms.

“His name is Captain Maynard, he is tall and dark and his eyes are blue; give him this and tell him the promise of summer has come.”

The pirate twisted his moustache and screwed up his eyes; his companion guffawed loudly.

“She’s shut down your hatches now, Gascon,” he said. “By God, you’re jammed fore and aft! Them mixed words will set your tongue a-floundering worse’n an unballasted ship around the cape.”

“‘The promise of summer has come,’” repeated the other slowly, reaching up his hand for the blossoms, which he put into his pocket. “Couldn’t you find it in your heart to make it a little more convincing?” he asked quizzically.

“He will understand, and to you I will be grateful all the days of my life,” she said with a winning smile.

The man’s face grew grave, for a minute he was silent. When he spoke his voice had lost its rollicking humor.

“And I do your errand, will you give me one token, Mistress?”

"Damaris grew white and trembled a little.

"Marry, you need have no fear, Mistress. 'Tis something easily spared. Will you give me your little red shoe?"

Damaris smiled as she glanced at the shoe still in her hand.

"Truly, with all the pleasure in the world. Would it were something more worthy." She dropped it into his hands.

"Chicken-livered, damn if he ain't turned priest!" laughed John Lat loudly. "Taking a woman's shoe when her lips is untook. Kisses is softer than words!"

Gascon shoved him roughly away. "Curse you, I'll kill you if you say another word! Get out of my sight if you don't want to be buried on land, you scurvy scoundrel!" he cried fiercely; and some power he seemed to hold over his ruffianly companion, for with a volley of oaths and scowling viciously John Lat moved away. Gascon lifted his hat; his voice was mocking but his eyes were serious, and he held aloft the little red shoe. "Au revoir, I am yours to the death! For skull and cross-bones the *Queen Anne* sails henceforth under the red shoe for good luck, fair Mistress!"

"Good-by," answered Damaris. "Would that it could bring you luck in a better cause, but come what may, I will ever be grateful."

Hand on his heart, the pirate bowed. Jeering laughter came from his companion, who had turned to watch him. Gascon put on his plumed hat with

a flourish, and drawing his knife with a threatening gesture, followed his companion.

Out of the tree Damaris slid to the ground. She rested her head weakly against the wall. Ice and fire ran alternately through her veins and her heart seemed to be a long way off.

A mocking-bird that had been feasting upon mulberries balanced himself upon a twig and jeered at her, then seeing that she did not move made a short flight nearer and burst into lovely fragments of song.

## CHAPTER X

### DISENCHANTMENT

"Cold winter is fled and gone,  
And summer brags on every tree;  
The red-breast peeps among the throng  
Of wood-brown birds that wanton be;  
Each one forgets what they have been,  
And so doth Phyllis, summer's queen."

—Anon.

The pirates, after enjoying their sight-seeing, the amusements of the town, and the confusion of their enemies, had betaken themselves again to their ships with the desired chest of medicine. After lying about the Bar for several days, there being some division among themselves, largely fostered by the discontent of Stede Bonnet, who had been deposed from his captaincy, they finally came to some decision and sailed away, to the vast joy of the terrorized and indignant Provinces.

*The Indian Emperor*, set free and reprovisioned, continued her interrupted voyage to England. One less passenger she carried, however, for in those hours of durance when death seemed closer than a hand's breath, Captain Maynard had time for thought, and looking back over the past few fevered days he saw himself as very little of a hero. He had run away from a woman, he had practically deserted his post, and that under guise of pleasing his father.



He was, however, a strong man, lusty with the love of life, which grew all the sweeter as it seemed to be slipping away, and above all he longed for opportunity in which to redeem himself. He had been disappointed, and that bitterly, but in him was no mawkish craving for death—the rather an overpowering desire to prove himself a man in the eyes of the woman who had trifled with him. It were easy when death is far off to court it in fancy, but a sane man in a sane moment never wilfully sacrifices his life; the instinct to cling to the known is stronger than the fear of circumstance. His life had naturally inured him to the thought of death, with it came no sense of shock; now with the prospect of it speedily befalling him, he made his peace with himself and the world. He had forgiven Damaris, as he had also others who had injured him, but with a larger sense of generosity in her case. Then he put his past life behind him, buried it in the sea as it were, speculated a little about the future life, but more as to the probability of ridding himself of these bonds, and was somewhat given to maledictions upon his captors and threatenings as to what he would do to them had he his will. Before the return of the pirate emissaries his decision was taken to return to the Province should he be spared, and the day *The Emperor* weighed anchor for England he sped home in a small junk that had reprovisioned the rifled ship. The news of his return ran speedily through the town and his father, who had thought never again to set eyes upon him, ran to meet him and swore that never again should he set sail on the sea for the having

and holding of forty Englands. The Governor, to whom his return was a genuine gratification and relief, sought him out in haste to welcome him, and obtain from him full particulars of the late occurrence of the pirates, their strength and destination.

Lady Kildare, who had rejoiced maliciously over his going, now raged openly over what she considered an impertinent interference with Providential dispensation. To consider that one holds the winning card and then to have one's game spoiled by an unexpected trump turning up is vastly disconcerting to the average human mind.

Damaris did not seek him, neither did she rage over his coming, but she flitted in and out of the house, doing forty things within the hour, now hoping for his coming, now fearing it.

Two days passed and he came not; he was full of affairs Damaris reasoned, nor angered herself against him.

Like the persimmon, that anomaly among fruits, a woman's heart needs the touch of frost to ripen it and sweeten it.

A woman is not changed in a day, as her hair sometimes is from brown to white, but circumstances force to the front another of the beings of whom her complex nature is fond. That day of tense anxiety had made Damaris realize some of her nature's possibilities of pain; the laughter had died out of her eyes and with clearer vision she had seen the boundless horizon of life pregnant with purpose old as the stars.

The third morning she had been making strawberry marmalade, and with fingers all pink and fragrant was passing through the hall. Fresh as a wild convolvulus she looked, lissome her figure, airy her gown, bloomy ripe her lovely lips. Suddenly she paused; a determined step crossed the piazza, a tall figure entered the door. Still she stood, herself drawn up to her fullest height, a wave of happiness rippling from her heart and breaking into music upon all the shores of her sensibility, yet in her mind a breathless timidity, her face rosy with the shame of surrender. She had sent the flag of truce, she must pay the costs of the war, she waited for what he might take with beating pulse.

“Good-morning, Mistress Damaris. I hope you find yourself well. I suppose that I will find the Governor in his study.” He regarded her with indifferent eyes and spoke as to an ordinary acquaintance.

“Yes, my father is within,” she answered quietly.

“Thank you,” he answered, and passed on with a bow.

The very floor upon which Damaris stood seemed to be turned into scorching flames of shame that enveloped and consumed her, yet the glad tide of life that had throbbled at his coming was congealed into hard ice in her veins. She had been petted, cajoled, adored, combatted in her life; but ignored, never. As no heroine of story did she act; she neither wept nor fainted, neither gave she voice to lamentations pitiful—she was too real to be dramatic. She stood in angry thought, her hands

clenched hard, her lips white, her face like the Governor's. "I come of a race of soldiers!" she said, throwing back her head. "I never liked him, I was only troubled because I thought that I had sent him to his death; now I shall always hate him!"

Then she took up her basket and scissors and went out into the garden. Hard by the study window she gathered roses, the while she gathered she sang a blithe ballad, and the young man within leaning over the papers heard above the Governor's even tones the lilting voice singing—

"He mounted himself on a coal-black steed  
And her on a freckled gray,  
With a buglet horn hung down by his side,  
And roundly they rode away."

## CHAPTER XI

### MEASURE FOR MEASURE

"Thy wit is quick as the greyhound's mouth; it catches."  
—*Much Ado About Nothing.*

"I am not bound to please thee with my answers."  
—*Merchant of Venice.*

Lady Kildare and Mistress Damaris were among the guests bidden to a large dinner given at one of the outlying plantations. The ladies of the party were to drive out early in the cool of the morning, the gentlemen later, as affairs permitted.

Lady Kildare called in her great coach for Damaris. Right glad of an opportunity was the venerable schemer to have that young lady to herself, the said young lady having been somewhat shy of her presence since the memorable ball.

"You look vastly fine this morning, Mistress Damaris," she said, as the girl, like a great full-petaled rose in her white draperies, settled down among the damask coach cushions. "Drive slowly, Terrence, I can't a-bear the jolting of these roads in the wilderness. There's no hurry to get there," she said, turning again to Damaris. "Just a parcel of musty old frumps who have been gathering since dawn, never a man among them. Where the carcass is

there will the eagles be gathered together. Now tell me what you have been doing that you are ashamed of, that you hide yourself from me."

"Making sweet-meats, Madam," answered Damaris demurely.

"Making mince-meat out of your prospects, rather," she snapped. "Tolling back Tomahawk from the way he should go."

Damaris started and blushed in dismay—how could her Ladyship know.

"Marry, I am glad to see that you have the grace to blush for your company," remarked the shrewd old observer.

"Nay, your Ladyship, I do not blush for my company, but for those who have poisoned your mind against a worthy gentleman," she answered with asperity.

"Hoity, toity, pretty Miss Kitty has claws!" said her tormentor, chuckling wickedly.

Damaris, ashamed of her spleen and provoked to have given her adversary the advantage thereof, looked out of the coach window. They were rolling along a stretch of shady road, on either hand hedges of Cherokee roses, long arms of blossom-laden vine reaching up into red bud and maple; long trailers of blossoming grape vine down from above, filling the air with dusty sweetness.

"Nay, child," said her Ladyship, tapping her arm with her tortoise-shell fan, "we won't quarrel about such a trifle as a man. By my troth, they aren't worth a woman's heart, much less her temper. 'Tis a long drive to Accabee and silence is a woman's earthly purgatory. I could almost love Tomahawk

for your sake, but a sorry nightmare I would ride to the tryst."

"You need not discommode yourself so greatly, dear Lady Kildare," said Damaris, laughing, "seeing that I do not love him myself."

"To lie about affairs of the heart is permitted by the saints," spoke Lady Kildare grimly.

"I never lie, Madam!" said Damaris hotly.

"Then you have a great deal to learn. Lies are the life-preservers of society."

"They are an abomination to the upright!"

"Such are truly too few to be accounted. Lies are the ever-present help to the devious majority, and of such are the children of men."

"Which majority I will never swell."

"Ta, ta, we are the creatures of circumstance. You have not yet been forced by expediency; necessity comes with the lie in her mouth."

Again Damaris gave herself up to the study of the wayside. In somewhat she had lost the sharp edge of her spirit and the wordy warfare tired her. Today, too, the brilliant cynicism of her companion hurt her out here in the heart of God's green world where Nature is truth. There was something restful to her in the green fringes of the palmettoes rustling in the minor tones of Creation's symphonic chorus; the brooding notes of the pines voiced it in fuller air, and a nonpareil fluttering in and out of the Yaupon bushes, where nested its mate, struck with song jubilant the highest note of love creative.

"Why don't you marry Francis Yonge, child; he is mad about you?" asked Lady Kildare suddenly.

Damaris brought her eyes slowly back from the pinky masses of blossoms that billowed fragrantly over the level pine barrens through which they were passing, and looked amusedly into the eagle-sharp eyes that were compelling her.

"Mr. Yonge was never in earnest in his life," she answered.

"Heaven forbid, he is an agreeable man. People who are in earnest are always reformers, or revolutionists, or Dissenters, or something moral or meddlesome. You know that he loves you, he has told you so a score of times; what is the use of trying to make him into something never intended by Nature. We can't all be beavers and moles and murderers!" she answered crushingly.

"He but loves me with his lips," Damaris fenced lightly.

"And a very good-looking pair of lips they are, and passing well versed in lip-service, I warrant. Beshrew me, Francis Yonge is no milk sop and can buss fairly enough!" snapped her Ladyship.

"I do not love him!" Damaris replied hotly.

"No more should you. A woman should never love her husband, it makes him exacting. A genteel amount of pretense is all that is necessary and vastly more well-bred."

"I could never play the hypocrite!"

"The greater fool, you. Hypocrisy is the stronghold of the wise, and hypocrites shall inherit the earth and the fulness thereof."

"I prefer to be a beggar and an outcast!"

"And live in a wigwam?" significantly.



"'Twere better to dwell in tents with a clear conscience than in kings' palaces with a corrupt spirit!" she maintained stoutly, ignoring the thrust.

"Conscience is a cant term for a bad digestion. Biblical tents were picturesque metaphors. Tomahawk's wigwams are ill-smelling skins."

"Love will transform them into bowers of paradise," Damaris answered, with outward sweetness and inward rage.

Lady Kildare glowered at her, then sinking back into her corner, pretended to be asleep.

With a sigh of relief into her own corner-fortress sank the girl, and gave herself up to a dreamy observation of the forest and open through which they passed.

Parrakeets flashed in and out of the bay trees; spun silver with cuirass of vert iridescent, dragon-flies darted where the Wampee marshalled its forests of spears; flaunting begonias, brave in the king's scarlet and gold, blew flaring trumpets across the still black waters of lagoons; a great white heron, startled, clove the greenery with heavy wings.

"Heigho! we are well near our destination. 'Twill take a special dispensation of amiability to preserve peace among the women until the men arrive," spoke Lady Kildare discontentedly, coming back suddenly from her enforced nap.

"I have already used up my dispensation," answered Damaris, ruefully.

"Saucy minx," chuckled her Ladyship delightedly, "your wit, at least, is of pretty endurance. You ought to have been my daughter."

"God forbid!" ejaculated Damaris devoutly.

"What do you mean, Miss?" demanded the other sharply.

"Only this, that I would long since have been made into Mistress Francis Yonge, *nolens volens*."

"Truth, so would you, and a far better fate than your deserts, Miss Malapert. 'Tis a shameful thing for a blade of steel to mate with an axe of clay," she grumbled.

"In this case the blade of steel remains in its scabbard and the axe goes back to its own," laughed Damaris. "Truly, dear Lady Kildare, did you but know the errors into which the zeal of your friendship has beguiled your judgment, you would never set your affections upon a woman again."

"Don't speak in riddles, I like plain speech. Tell me what you mean," queried Lady Kildare eagerly.

"I only mean that I am fancy free and would assure you thereof," she laughed airily. "May I jump out and gather me a posy of those locust blossoms?"

While she gathered the heavy, creamy trusses, honey-scented, bee-haunted, Lady Kildare studied her keenly, muttering to herself discontentedly: "She lies, and that right honestly. A fortnight ago I might have believed her, but to-day, not by my word; there comes a look into her eyes when she thinks that belonged never to a sane woman. Heaven forgive me that I am grown so dull that I cannot tell which he be. It cannot be that I am growing old!" and she shivered uneasily.

"There is no need to leave room for death," she said fearfully, looking at the vacant seat beside her. "Make haste, child, we must not tarry upon the way; it grows late," she cried tremulously.

## CHAPTER XII

### SEATS OF THE MIGHTY

"Thus have I had thee as a dream doth flatter;  
In sleep a king; but waking, no such matter."

*Shakespeare—Sonnet.*

Peace had been preserved among the ladies, gossip had come to the rescue and only the absent had suffered. The gentlemen had arrived, dinner was ended, and now the company were assembled upon the rose-screened piazza. About the house stood the patriarch live-oaks wagging their hoary beards; over the young flower-beds, blazing in the afternoon sun, darted humming-birds to and fro, weaving a vivid pattern of light. The party had broken up into little groups, purposeful and accidental. Damaris, with Colonel Parris, had wandered out upon the lawn and sat under a clump of orange trees heavy with blooms and besieged by bees; at a little distance Captain Maynard and Mistress Dorothy Bowers sauntered idly up and down under a group of oaks. Damaris fanned herself with a shining palm leaf that her companion had cut for her. More than once her eyes wandered from the infatuated face before her to the swaying shadows of the strolling couple. From the piazza sounded the mocking laughter of Francis Yonge and the harsh cackling of Lady Kildare, who were enjoying themselves in warfare wordy and

spicy; also the steady voice of the Governor; and the blended murmur of voices less significant.

Lady Kildare, who had kept her sharp eye upon Damaris, was in high good humor, seeing that she and Captain Maynard had but greeted each other with common-place civilities, and then that baffling young person had submitted gracefully to Francis Yonge's reckless lovemaking, and at this present seemed to be enjoying equally the admiration of Colonel Parris.

"If I thought that there were any chance," Colonel Parris was saying.

"The chances are always to the brave," Damaris answered lightly. Her eyes were fastened upon a disturbed chameleon, emerald green upon an orange twig, that puffed his red blanket in and out.

"I want more than a chance, I want a promise!" he urged.

Into Damaris's line of vision came again the swaying shadows and the hem of Mistress Dorothy's rose-colored gown.

"After all, promises do not count greatly; they are easily broken," she replied teasingly.

"Are you ever in earnest, Mistress Damaris?" he asked irately.

"Sometimes—when I hate," she answered quietly. Again the shadows drifted toward her.

"So am I, Mistress Damaris!" he answered harshly, and there was an ugly look in his treacherous, close-set eyes.

"This is not a day to hate," she answered brightly.

"After all, do we really hate, or is it a nightmare?" she added thoughtfully.

"There is no doubt about the reality of my hate!" he replied emphatically; "or of my love, fair lady," he added sentimentally.

"Come now, Colonel Parris, every mother's son since Adam has thought and declared the same thing; nevertheless, there have been some few memorable defections."

"You are ever pleased to make light of me," he spoke reproachfully.

"So do I also make light of myself. I am a trifle lighter than air, and how can I consider a matter so weighty as a man's love? How could one be serious an afternoon like this—it is a day of dreams?" She closed her eyes and waved her palm leaf gently before her. Despoiled by marauding bees the petals of the orange blossoms drifted down and clung to her hair and gown in fragrant silence; the chameleon, grown motionless, lay like an emerald scarab against the stem.

Colonel Parris regarded the baffling creature with irate eyes.

"You are heartless, Mistress Damaris, and cruel as you are beautiful!"

Damaris straightened herself energetically and turned at bay.

"To tell a woman that she is beautiful is a poor compliment to her understanding. If it be true you do but repeat what her mirror must often have told her more plainly; to consider that she values it is to exaggerate her vanity or to increase it. To call me cruel is to use the hackneyed expression of every play-house lover. Because I am a woman every idle gallant considers that he has a right to make love to

me; because I cannot straightway fall in love with every man who calls himself my admirer, I am cruel. Forsooth, 'tis you of the braver sex who are cruel to me. I am worn of the theme of love, the very name of it starts a ringing in my ears. Couldn't you treat me like a man just once, talk to me of battle and murder and sudden death—or any other agreeable subject?"

"I am unfortunate, since my conversation offends," replied Colonel Parris, drawing himself up haughtily.

"If you are really sorry," she answered sweetly, "I know that we will be better friends; contrition works reformation."

"I dare not aspire to so great honor as the friendship of Mistress Johnson," he answered, unmollified.

Damaris rose, laughing gaily.

"Nay, then, we will be foes and straightway will I carry the war into the enemy's country—look to the outworks of your vanity. Meanwhile, we will call a truce. Will you row me across the pond to gather some iris?"

"I am yours to command," he replied stiffly. He was a vain man and an unforgiving, of a temper not easily controlled.

"I would never command even an enemy to unwelcome service," she answered coolly. "I will call Mr. Yonge."

"Nay, I beseech you forgive me," he pleaded warmly, suddenly brought to terms by his jealousy; "do not deprive me of so great a pleasure. I confess I spoke churlishly, but when a man's best feelings are trampled upon—"

“He uses his second best, which are a little more elastic,” she finished for him as she moved toward the boat.

“Meanwhile, on the piazza new groups had formed themselves. Governor Johnson, Mr. Yonge, Captain Maynard, Mr. Richard Allein, their host, a lawyer of prominence, were engaged in animated discussion. Also Sir Hovenden Walker talked with them, he being an admiral in the British service, who had commanded the unsuccessful expedition sent out against Canada in 1711, and who afterwards had been for a time Deputy-Governor of North Carolina.

Recently affairs of great moment had been transpiring to the vast detriment of the Colony. Again a tyrannical hand had been laid upon the festering sore of Colonial discontent, wakening it to feverish irritability. Between the indifference and the greed of the Proprietors and the calculating foresight of the Crown, that saw in the Colony possible source of future wealth and strength, there was a seriously hampered existence for the struggling community. Involved in all the wars of the Mother Country, paying heavy toll of her infant commerce alike to pirates and England, she but hardly retained her footing.

“I hope that affairs may soon have a better countenance and these causes of disturbance be removed.” It was the Governor who was speaking. “But two days since, upon the 18th of June, I sent to their Lordships a full and exhaustive relation of our condition and needs; therein gave I in detail the recent daring and insulting visitation of pirates, appealing to their fatherly affection for us, entreating them

that they send us in our present necessity two frigates to cruise about the coast and relieve us from this great oppression of robbers."

"Truly, your Excellency, we are deeply sensible of your efforts in our behalf, and of your untiring pains to better our condition with the Board; but the most skilful workman makes not a silken purse of a sow's ear. The policy of the Proprietors toward us has been of the most unnatural and unprofitable temper. The Colony is still indignant over their vaunted munificence of quit-rents to extend to May 3, 1716, the which was so justly and indignantly refused by the Assembly. The new tax of £12 against the original £3 of Queen Anne's reign, you may argue, is caused by the depreciation of our money. To whom is this depreciation due, your Excellency? Had our unnatural Charterists responded to our just and reasonable appeals, would this surplus of paper currency be flooding the land? Our Assembly is forced to meet in a room that is loaned. Is it not fitting that they should build us a State House? Instead of building us a prison, of which we are sorely in need, our debtors and criminals escaping because of insufficient quarters, our monies go to paying the rents of lands that have become unprofitable because of Indian depredations, and the reduced profits thereof being levied upon by a swarm of pirates from whom they will not protect us. God only knows what is to become of us."

"Forsooth, your Lordship, one not gifted with divine foresight might answer that question," suggested Mr. Yonge, with a cynical smile.

"And that answer would be—?"



"A royal reprisal. The careful eye of the Hanoverian has long been upon us, the chance of profit awakes the royal sense of justice."

"God save the King!" said the Governor, rising.

"And confound the Proprietors!" said Mr. Yonge fervently.

"Such levity ill becomes the Deputy of my Lord Carteret," spoke the Governor reprovingly.

"Pardon, your Excellency, but when one's chartered masters ignore their obligations, fealty passes away with good faith," replied Yonge courteously.

"We must admit that His Majesty has not shown himself reluctant to our appeals," said Richard Allein, speaking for the first time. "Upon our direct representation he sent out Captain Rogers with a fleet to New Providence, there to cruise in the pirates' headquarters, and to declare the King's pardon to all who would surrender and take the oath within the twelve-month."

"A feint," said Francis Yonge; "a mere straw to show which way the wind blows. The zeal of the King for our cause will be restrained by royal prudence until such time as we make full and unqualified appeal to him, or until such time when policy will dictate that he shall relieve the Proprietors of our responsibility. Our George II. is little English at heart."

"The Proprietors are our lawful masters, so established by grant of His Majesty Charles II., secured by the Crown to them and the lawful heirs of their bodies forever," spoke the Governor warmly.

"'Twere easier to have than to hold," said Yonge grimly.

"Good faith needs no holding; 'twere its own surety," replied Governor Johnson steadily.

"Good faith grows decrepit in a halting service."

"Honesty never halts," spoke the Governor gravely.

"Honesty wears many colors, and self-protection a very serviceable one," said Yonge quietly.

There was a tense silence. Three of the gentlemen smoked thoughtfully; the Governor sat with folded arms, his grave eyes fixed aloft on a buzzard poising upon splendid wing, forming the keystone of the heavenly arch, as it were.

"At any rate, the King's proclamation has done us sorry service," finally spoke Mr. Allein. "'Tis but a safe passport for the rascals to run into port, surrender to the King's pardon, then, refitted as privateers, with a legalized trade of robbery, take up their pestilent career again under safer auspices. Our worthy friend Mr. Edward Thatch, of malodorous sea fame, otherwise Blackbeard, did take the oath of Governor Eden, of North Carolina, then straightway began a more audacious career, paying us shortly that memorable visit a fortnight since, an insult which, to our great discredit, has not yet been wiped out in blood."

"The shame lies at our door," said Sir Hovenden Walker.

"We will abide in patience, gentlemen," said the Governor. "The time is not yet ripe for our revenge, neither means convenient. Can we lay our hand upon funds at our will? Furthermore, this present time, up to September, will be a period of comparative immunity, there be few ships going or coming;

but in September recommences the commerce of our Province, also the coming of rich merchantmen to our port. Against that time we must provide with strenuous measures. Perchance assistance may come from the Proprietors. That failing us, we will stand by our own efforts."

"So be it," assented his companions, and looked meaningly at each other.

"From that source we need never expect justice as long as we cherish the viper in our bosom," said Mr. Allein bitterly.

"Nay, 'tis probable you speak wisely," said Francis Yonge. "'Tis openly spoken of and currently circulated in the town that there exists a most mischievous correspondence between Justice Trott and the Board, which works to our lasting undoing."

"There is certainly an evil complexion to the matter," said the Governor sadly. Some time since he had come to realize the fact that though he was nominally invested with the authority of the Board, Trott and Rhett were their virtual exponents.

"No colony can prosper where all the judicial power is vested in one judiciary," said Sir Hovenden.

"And that a corrupt one," said Mr. Yonge. "Furthermore, rumor brings tidings that Trott and Rhett do move heaven and earth to prevail upon the Proprietors to revert to the original method of holding elections in Charles Town."

"Impossible!" cried the other gentlemen, aghast.

"With the Devil nothing is impossible," replied Mr. Yonge, and whistled softly to himself.

"It is most damnable trickery and treasonable corruption," stormed Sir Hovenden, striking his fist upon the arm of his chair.

"Speak you with a semblance of authority, Mr. Yonge?" asked Governor Johnson gravely.

"The Devil is a politician; he never gives his authority," replied Yonge lightly.

"It were kinder to spare us your levity at this time, Mr. Yonge, seeing that we are greatly troubled."

Mr. Yonge drew his eyelids close down till only the sinister spark of light showed between, and took a pinch of snuff deliberately, not neglecting to brush the dust from his ruffles before he spoke.

"Your Honor must pardon what seems levity, since no disrespect was intended; you must pardon also that I am not in a position to give my authority for what is yet only a whispered rumor over seas, seeing I am somewhat straitly placed in the matter. Good faith to your Honor requires that I should speak clearly, having said so much; good faith to others demands that I should never have mentioned the matter at all. Since the fiends and the saints both pipe to me at the same time, I pray your clemency."

"You have our thanks for the hint you have given us; yet what can it avail, seeing our hands are tied," said the Governor, deeply moved.

"Politics, politics," said Lady Kildare, joining them. The gentlemen rose; she leaned on her stick, her glance passing from one to the other. "Fortunately nothing has been said about there being no politics in heaven, else never a man would lift his eyes to the jewelled gates."

"We will need some cause of strife there, said Mr. Yonge, "seeing that there will be no giving in marriage."

"Certainly not," replied Lady Kildare, "seeing that there will a woman's eyes be opened to the knowledge of good and evil. And yet methinks, Mr. Yonge, and my eyes deceive me not, you have been somewhat zealous in seeking strife."

There followed a laugh at Mr. Yonge's expense, in which even the Governor joined quietly.

"Madame," said Mr. Yonge, with mock solemnity, "it is the misfortune of the children of this generation to choose evil rather than good."

"Forsooth, 'tis also the privilege of some of the chosen evil to reject the children of this generation," retorted her Ladyship amid renewed laughter.

"Then should your Ladyship be the more pitiful, knowing our fate, since virtue ever respects misfortune."

"And wisdom consorts not with impudence."

"Will your Ladyship allow me the honor of escorting you home?"

"Which means that you would like to ride in the coach with Mistress Damaris," replied her Ladyship tartly, while a smile went round, this time at her expense. "I've half a mind to invite Tomahawk instead."

Francis Yonge smiled mockingly; he knew that she would rather invite a pirate crew.

"Shall I call your coach?" he asked sweetly.

"Make haste to do so. 'Tis growing late and we will be catching an ague in these dismal swamps.

Here comes Mistress Damaris at last; hey, but the girl is a coquette born."

The party was not long in breaking up. Even their hosts were returning to the town, the plantations being considered unhealthy during the summer nights. Lady Kildare and Damaris were handed into their coach, Mr. Yonge following, and Captain Maynard closing the door after them.

"I hope that you have passed a pleasant day," he said perfunctorily to Damaris.

"It has been an absolutely perfect day," she answered gaily. "There was nothing to be desired."

"You are truly fortunate," he replied, and the coach moved off briskly.

A moment later Mr. Yonge, who had been adjusting Lady Kildare's cushions and wraps, turned toward Damaris with some sally. He was troubled to see how white and tired she looked all of a sudden, and confined his conversation to her Ladyship until she fell asleep in her corner.

"Follow suit," said Mr. Yonge softly; "the day has been long and warm."

"Nay, I never sleep at my post."

"Between the dark and the daylight comes the truce."

"'Tis good tidings; my sword arm is spent."

"I am a man of peace."

"And I a woman of few words." She rested her face upon her hand and leaned out of the window. Fresh against her face rose the coolness of dewy herbage; drowsily sweet the breath of night-bloomers; dusky bats, velvet winged, flitted shadow-like among shadows; a sleepy stirring among reeds sleepily piping; frogs singing themselves hoarsely to

sleep; life of the forest, of barren and of open, slumberously sinking under the spell of nature's multi-voiced cradle-song—the solemn hush of a world going back to God.

The spell of the hour seemed to have fallen upon Francis Yonge, he was unwontedly silent and grave; from time to time he carried on a desultory talk, but for the greater part he left the languid girl to her thoughts.

When they reached the Governor's house Lady Kildare aroused herself and bade Damaris good-night, then, escorted by Mr. Yonge, she mounted the steps.

"For me there should be some sort of paradise; for an hour have I driven with you in the twilight without one word of love," he pleaded.

"Your supply of such is exhausted; you but await a new importation from the London playhouses."

"Think you truly so? Then will I take pleasure in proving to you at an early opportunity how inexhaustible is my supply."

"Nay, I am but of small experience in such matters; prove it to some one else and tell me about it. Good-night and a fair good fortune to you," she laughed, and slipped within out of his sight.

Mr. Yonge narrowed his eyes and stood looking after her. "What is she made of, I wonder?" he mused. "Something that surpasses my knowledge and my skill, something that baffles and turns me down at every point. Damme, I'll not be a girl's plaything; I'll go back to London. No, damme, I won't. I'll play it out to the end. Fore the Lord, I believe that I really am in love. Fool, fool, fool, I must buy me a cap and bells."

## CHAPTER XIII

### FOREST FIRES

"Sweet is the rose, but grows upon a brere."

—*Chaucer.*

"Come away! break through all delays; a woman is a changeful thing."

—*Virgilius.*

The fervid September sun made the day faint and drowsy, until with the afternoon came an easterly breeze that freshened it into spasmodic life.

The Governor and Damaris sat upon the porch in the shade of the great magnolia; upon its broad leaves the breeze pattered musically. Some non-pareils, vivid scarlet and emerald, flashed in and out among the oranges now showing the first golden gleam upon their sunny sides. A warm, heavy smell, like the artificial sweetness of a ballroom, rose from the garden, where the spendthrift summer still rioted in tropic bloom.

Both father and daughter looked somewhat wan after the long summer. Damaris, almost asleep, lay her head upon the balustrade and from her relaxed hand the *Spectator* dropped heavily to the floor.

The Governor looked up from the document in his hand and smiled sadly upon her. "Poor little maid, she needs the wholesome air of bonny England," he said; then putting his papers upon the stand beside him, leaned back in his heavy Windsor



chair and gave himself up to thought. Across the comfortless seas flashed his mind to England. He saw it as only an Englishman who loves it can see it—the peaceful green fields, long tilled by honest custom, yielding hundredfold bounties; the huddling flocks in pastures sweet, safe from marauding savage; the dusky circles of rooks calling above the tall elms that breasted the gray old tower; the great hall where he was wont to sit at his father's feet, the stag-hounds nosing round him, listening to the stories of his father's fightings in the Low countries. How different the childhood of his daughter, how changed his own environment. In the new country honors came fast, troubles the faster. Verily the Colony had travailed into existence.

What had made England what she was was the amalgamation of the greatest and strongest of peoples. This had not come in a day; centuries had gone to the wearing away of national peculiarities and the welding into one nation of Anglo-Saxon, Norman and Dane. Here was amalgamation, but in the roughness of first chaotic mixture. Political party, national prejudice, religious intolerance rose up hotly whensoever the stress of subsistence or the necessity of protection against a common enemy were for a moment relaxed. English grudged aliens the right of representation; Protestants disallowed office to Catholics; Quakers, smarting under indignities suffered in the old country, looked with jealous eye upon Cavalier supremacy. Small remembrance there was that in the Constitution, which the great Locke had assisted in framing, there were but three conditions of citizenship—belief in God, worship of

Him, attestation to this belief in case of need. And always among the people the dissatisfaction grew against the Proprietors who had tempted them into the wilderness, and here left them to be harassed and hunger-bitten, to hold their own hardly enough against the black flag by sea and the tomahawk by land, the last instigated to greater rancor by the national enemy Spain, now firmly established in Florida.

It was a splendid scheme of the Proprietors to found this empire in a land teeming with riches. In the first flush of enterprise they poured out their gold with unstinted hand. No man ever sailed to found a colony with greater promise than William Sayle. The first enthusiasm wore away and with it the free hand. Always from over seas tales of disaster and loss; no return from their El Dorado. Engrossed with affairs of lands and politics at home, the Colony was no longer an eager and hopeful enterprise, but a troublesome dependent, and so they tried to rid themselves of its claims upon them by neglect; having once put their hands to the plough they drew back.

The Colony, forgetful of past benefits, resentful of present wrongs, fretted under their yoke and thought wishfully of the King and the King's protection. Always the question in the Governor's mind was, How long could he reconcile these people to its lawful rulers? And yet he admitted not the question from another. The shadow lengthened upon the dial, the Governor drew himself up with a start, noted the hour by his repeater, then, crossing to where Damaris drowsed, kissed her brow where the breeze lifted the little damp curls.

Still half asleep, she lifted her languid arms and clasped them about his neck, raised her lips velvety with sleep to his, then she opened her eyes, made like unto a little child's again by sleep.

"Where are you going, father?" she asked drowsily.

"To the Council Chamber."

"'Tis always the Council Chamber. Methinks you are fuller of weighty affairs than the King of England himself."

"And so perhaps we are at this present," said the Governor, with a bitter smile. "Certes we are than our Lords Proprietors."

"You need a woman to govern you; they are ever wiser than men. Look at good Queen Bess, how royally she governed Virginia. A woman knows her own mind and holds thereto, nor makes she a decision a matter of great wordiness."

"So a woman knows her own mind, does she, Mistress Damaris? I wonder if a certain redoubtable Captain would agree thereto? And is not given to great wordiness." Straight into her innocent eyes the Governor looked and smiled inscrutably, the while Damaris blushed until the lace on her kerchief almost grew pink with shame.

"Only word for word she gives that a man may not feel that it is more blessed to give than to receive," she retorted.

"Truly, then are you among women the most blessed. Further, I dare say, you are right; there are times when your cavaliers do not altogether feel the blessedness of receiving. Good-by, go to sleep

again; some one is out of harm's way when you sleep."

Damaris shook her finger menacingly after the retreating figure, then rising, stretched herself languidly, the breeze catching the folds of her rose-flowered gown. "Heigh-ho, Damaris Johnson, you are a sluggard, sleeping away the golden hours. It must be something in the sun of this strange land, something in the breath of its flowers. You must be up and doing ere you grow old and gray in rest. Robbins, Robbins!" she called to a man passing through the shrubbery. The laborer doffed his cap and approached.

"At your service, Mistress." He was a covenant servant run away from Virginia.

"Order my horse to be saddled. Ask Sergeant McLeod to attend me. I will ride to the plantation in half hour sharp, if you please."

Upon the minute the horses were at the block, Sergeant McLeod, booted and spurred, in ready attendance. The tip of her pointed shoe in his hand, Damaris flew like a bird to her perch, patted Comet's red gold neck, gathered the reins into her hand, swung out of the gate unbarred for her, and a moment later was cantering up the narrow street that led to the thoroughfare, and thence to the town walls, Sergeant McLeod clattering behind her.

Through the soft dirt streets, now thick with dust, rolled the heavy chariots, ablaze with quarterings, in which the women of fashion, still clinging to the pomp of the Old World, took their airings. Out of them bowed plumed heads, and chapeaux were lifted as she cantered by.

Up Meeting street she rode at a sharp pace, past the English Church and the White Meeting House of the Dissenters that gave to the street its name, straight on to the town gate, where the sentry saluted and opened for her with as great deference as to the Governor himself.

Once in the open, on the beautiful roadway cloven deep into the heart of green fastnesses lush and luxuriant, she raised herself in her stirrup and gave the jubilant cry of a bird uncaged. With the slackened rein Comet gave a forward plunge and was away like a racer upon the first quarter, whereupon Mistress Damaris composed herself right firmly in the saddle, mastered her reins with great expedition, and the faithful Sergeant must needs spur his hunter into a running accompaniment.

Through the semi-tropical forest the road led out straitly from the town. Gnarled branches groined the arches of live-oak domes, mosses like grey-beards in tatters made hoary the vistas; palmettoes raised their crowned heads above a world of underlings; cypresses stood knee-deep in water, black, shadowy, mysterious; magnolias in fragrant languor made the thirsty air faint with desire; sunshine, moonshine, starshine, woven into winged gauze, darted and quivered and dazzled in leafage and open; terrapins and frogs dropped from their sunning into sunless waters; snakes spotted and barred slipped and slid under water-plants evil-spotted as themselves; everywhere the hot tang of the fecund soil, the mysterious palpitation of the procreating earth quick with life.

Now and again they passed plantations, passed the minister's house with its goodly garden and steady, crossed bits of marshland where sleepy waters

drowns and flocks of marsh hens rose screaming. Upon a narrow causeway that led across jagged tongues of marshland a horseman overtook them. Hearing the hoof-beats, Damaris looked around, and when she saw Captain Maynard she wished from her heart that it might have been Black Beard or Vane who came riding behind her. Before her stretched the causeway, on either hand black sloughs set with tussocks of marsh against which alligators raised their black snouts; there was no escape save in full flight and the Johnsons had never been known to fly in the face of a foe. According to provincial usage, he would feel that he must join her, and both of them would thereby be made to feel vastly uncomfortable. The bitterness and hurt in her heart that she had been striving to stifle during these last months, became a hard and vengeful thing.

When he rode up and greeted her, her face wore the bomb-proof smile of a well-bred woman, but the heart within was in the state of a savage.

"Good-afternoon, Mistress Damaris."

"Good-afternoon, Captain Maynard."

"You ride far this afternoon."

"I ride to the plantation."

"I will wish you a pleasant ride and pray you excuse the liberty I take in passing you, since I am pressed for time."

"Certainly, I can well dispense with your company, and bid you good-afternoon."

"Good-afternoon." And a moment later his tall bay had carried him well ahead.

Damaris's hand relaxed, her rein fell slackly upon Comet's neck; once again had come to her a great awakening and a great shock.

Physics tell us that fire does not turn to ice nor ice to fire a hundred times in a hundred seconds, but a woman knows better, and what is more, when those moments are past a woman is made over again. When Damaris's hundred seconds were over she looked with new eyes upon a world which she seemed to see for the first time.

A woman's vanity roots deep, its fibres net the unconscious source of all her actions. That is a very hard hour for her when she finds for the first time that the world's appreciation has been gauged with false weights. The first unconscious creed of a rational woman is faith in herself; losing this she stands affrighted, for surely must everything else be wrong too.

Until now, whatever her angry speculations as to Captain Maynard's conduct, against reason, and unconsciously to herself, she had given him the benefit of the doubt, hoping always that matters might be explained or justify themselves in some way. Circumstances were all against him, but when one is twenty, one is superior to circumstance and ignores the proof of the ages. Now for every reserve of charity with which she had regarded him there rose up a hundred rancors. And to these rancors was added the venom of serpent's teeth when, upon riding through a copse and out into the open a while later, she discovered Captain Maynard upon a cross-way, reins hanging slackly, horse browsing in leisurely fashion upon the roadside

herbage. Her errand at the plantation consumed some time, and when she started homewards a low sun was shining slackly on the slanting shadows, a damp wind made it almost chill. She put her horse into a canter, and after a mile came upon Captain Maynard around a curve. Before she could take action of any kind he turned his horse across the road.

"You ride late; it is not well."

"Excuse me, Captain Maynard, but until I ask for your criticism upon my affairs you may spare yourself the trouble of giving it. Will you be so kind as to unblock the King's highway that I and my escort may pass?"

"That is just the matter in hand. I cannot unblock the King's highway, neither may you pass."

"I may not pass! What do you mean?" she asked angrily.

"Even this, that you may not go on; I cannot permit you to do so."

"How dare you speak in such manner to me; how dare interfere with me."

"If you will give me a moment I will be pleased to tell you, Mistress Damaris. By the Three Bridges, as I came along, I saw redskins lurking in the thicket."

"And pray what are a few friendly Indians?" she asked scornfully. "I pass scores of them in the week."

"Friendly Indians do not lurk under cover. They are likely some straggling Yamassees bent upon mischief."



"I hazard that they were no Indians; your mind is wont to run upon them; likely 'twas some red deer in the thicket. With Sergeant McLeod I have no fear; I will haste to ride on."

"I pray you listen to reason, Mistress Damaris; you cannot go on."

"I do not consider your nervous apprehension reasonable. I intend to ride straight to the town and that without further parley. Good-evening."

"Mistress Damaris, I beseech you—"

"Stand aside, Captain Maynard, and allow me to pass!" she commanded haughtily.

"I cannot, will not!" stoutly replied the Captain.

She raised her whip angrily and was about to lay it across his horse. He wheeled it suddenly, came closer to her, his face resolute, his voice masterful.

"You shall not ride home by the highway; you do not know what you would risk. What would Sergeant McLeod and I be against a dozen savages? I have dealt with you thus far as I would with any sensible woman; now if you will not listen to reason I must treat you as a child. I warn you, if you attempt to pass I will lift you from your saddle and carry you before me."

"You dare not."

"I have dared a good deal in my time. I will show you if you like." There was a determination in the way the long, strong arm swung toward her that was very convincing.

White and angry, Damaris entrenched herself in her silent rage. She had never been so angry before in her life. To be beholden to Captain Maynard for protection was more than her pride could bear.

"I would scorn to answer such a threat," she answered contemptuously, "but may I inquire what you propose to do, camp here in this swamp a prey to mosquitoes and agues?"

"I propose that we shall ride around by a road known to me, that is little more than a trail. There are in it several good jumps, to which I believe both you and Comet are equal. By so going we will put stretches of creek and impassable swamp between us and the possible danger."

"I do not believe that such a circuitous course is necessary."

"Unfortunately, your belief has nothing to do with it."

"If I were to agree—" she began tentatively.

"It is not necessary. You can go just as safely without. I caught a young squaw once who was going to give an alarm and carried her for ten miles. She fought like a tiger cat, but she reached camp all right."

"How dare you compare me with a savage?"

"I do not. Civilization had not refined her cruelty."

"What do you mean to insinuate?"

"I insinuate nothing; I simply mentioned the savage lady who was not given a choice. I have stated the terms of the convoy; you can decide as it pleases you. Do not hurry yourself; my father is accustomed to the irregularity of my movements and will not be alarmed. I find this opportunity for solitary and protracted conversation the happiest of my life; I pray you do not shorten it."

Damaris blushed furiously; she was hardly placed, and her opponent was ruthless, taking advantage of every weak place in her position. When she thought of her father she knew that she must surrender, and that right speedily—for him she would do that which she would not do for herself.

“Ride on, Captain Maynard. To spare my father anxiety I will follow, albeit against my judgment,” she commanded, head up, eyes flashing and the angriest heart that could be found in the Seven Nations.

“So you go, it matters not how you go,” he replied quietly, and turning about he struck off into a road that led to the left, Damaris riding ever in silence behind him whenever the road gave her an excuse therefor, the faithful and impassive McLeod bringing up the rear.

It was not very easy for Captain Maynard to make conversation under the circumstances—it were easier for a man to speak of a woman behind her back than to speak to her when she is behind his. Also when the woman’s vocabulary seems limited to yes and no; likewise when he knows that Aetna’s volcanic overflow would be cool compared with what would overwhelm him if once she gave voice to her mood.

Young blood would have rioted in that ride in the gloaming had hearts been less antagonistic. Neck to neck they would have ridden, the warm flanks of their horses pressed close, riders and steeds alike glad of comradeship. It was an hour in which to draw close to a kindred soul and rejoice in its nearness. While nature is shifting the scenes between the acts we seem to come closer to her and

to each other. When the curtain is down upon the audience mother and children are known of each other and speak to each other in the heart's simple tongue. Wonderful it was in the forest and of a weirdness passing words. The darkness was plaintive with the wail of whippoorwill, eery with the hooting of owls, alligators bellowed, frogs croaked and trebled till the air was thick with sound.

Overhead through the cloven branches shone the serene stars, and like star-dust powdering the shadows, drifted the haze of fire-flies.

Set apart by bitterness at flood tide rode the two, the mysterious forces of nature having no power to touch them; where strife is there dwells the blindness of the unseeing.

Gleams and glows of redness came sifting through the blackness, a warm, resinous breath filled their nostrils. "Forest fires!" exclaimed Captain Maynard, looking around uneasily.

Damaris vouchsafed no reply. She still rode very erect, hard eyes and a harder heart. Captain Maynard had long since withheld from vain attempts at conversation, and he did not trouble to look into her eyes, so their hardness offended him not.

The air grew more lurid, the forest more grotesque; tall pines burned their lightwood knobs redly aloft; like demons at play the trees reached their flame-arms over black waters, and out of black waters beckoned shadowy flame-arms to them; now and again there fell with a hiss a burning brand into the water.

Startled birds, chirping drowsily, flew heavily through the resinous smoke. Across the roadway

now and again was blown the breath of the flames, but fortunately the forest was set in swamps and thus only the driest trees took fire.

Suddenly, just ahead of them, a tremendous crash. Out of the heavens the sun, moon and stars seemed to come thundering down to light up an earthly firmament. The affrighted horses plunged, quivered and were hardly restrained. Prone across the road lay a mighty pine, fire-girt at its base, fire-tipped and fire-vernied, quivering with flame as it settled its burning length.

Damaris wheeled her trembling horse in front of Captain Maynard. Comet danced and plunged, but she heeded him not save with a firm hand.

"So 'tis to this that you have brought me with your superior wisdom!" she cried with angry unreason.

"I would I could tell you how grieved I am, but I could not foresee this," he said miserably.

"How long will we have to wait here?" she asked bitterly, every added moment an angry offense to her.

"Until that log burns through."

"Impossible!"

"We cannot pass around, the swamp is treacherous."

"I will try for myself."

"Just as you please. You will most likely bog your horse and the water is full of snakes and alligators."

She urged her horse defiantly toward the edge, while Captain Maynard bided his time with a ready hand. A snake glided hissing out of the flags into

which Comet set his feet, and Damaris quickly jerked him back into the road, with a cry of disgust.

Captain Maynard smiled grimly. He whispered a word to the Sergeant, who, turning his horse facing the way they had come, kept his eyes alert and his hand on his holster.

The watchful eyes of the Captain were seldom still; they swept the red reaches of the forest and penetrated the shadows. Sometimes, in passing, they rested upon Damaris's white face.

"I am very sorry that this has happened," he said gently.

"You need not concern yourself on my account," she replied shortly.

"I do not; 'tis of your father I think," he answered coolly.

"It is well. I would rather die than be beholden to you for even one thought," she said bitterly.

He rode a little nearer to her. In the red light that flamed warmly upon it he saw the concentrated anger and bitterness, all unmeet for the cause, he thought.

"Do you not think that you are over-acting a little? What have I done to justify such words from you?" he asked gravely.

"Dare you heap insult upon injury by asking?"

"Truly, I do not understand you—the moods of a woman are indeed beyond my kenning. That I have been hardly placed is my misfortune. To prevent your running into danger I was compelled to cross your humor; to make threats I was obliged by your wilfulness. That you would resent my thwarting you I expected—women are ever prone to anger

when they know themselves to be at fault; that you would carry petulance to such an extreme I did not dream. To do my duty to the Governor I was compelled to set aside the unreason of his daughter; and to sum up the matter, I have put aside what has recently passed between us and have acted as I would, upon the same occasion, to any woman!" he spoke hotly.

"I envy you the ease with which you set aside such things," she retorted scornfully. "For my part, the shame of it will remain with me always."

"Again I think that you have given to tragedy the part of comedy."

"To you it may be comedy, Captain Maynard; to me it is tragedy unalloyed."

"Let us turn the tragedy into comedy, Mistress Damaris, and we will call it 'All's Well That Ends Well.'"

"So be it, Captain Maynard, and to end well to me will mean that after this night there be no further converse between us."

"Nay, I asked not to turn it into some mummer's masque; rather would I prefer some goodly melodrama—'Love for Love,' let us say."

"Then must you seek Mrs. Oldfield in Covent Garden."

"Which would be but a sorry imitation, be Mr. Congreve never so great a wit and Mrs. Oldfield the first star of the footlights."

"So great a wit you have grown, Captain Maynard, that would you leave off harrying beasts and exterminating Indians you might sail to London and

hold your own at Will's with the learned Dean, and Mr. Steele and Mr. Addison would sit at your feet."

"Nay, but I would tell them of Mistress Damaris over seas; how a man learnt wit who sat at her feet—then would the glory be yours."

"The glory of this world passeth away."

"Not so swiftly as a woman's love, that is as the first frost on the fields."

"That is as the everlasting hills compared with a man's. But a truce to the making of idle speeches; of words have I had more than enough from you—truly they are as empty as air and an offense to me."

"As it pleases you," replied he stiffly, and relapsed into grim silence.

For some time the silence lasted. Damaris grew restless, for now that her foe was silenced, with the perversity of woman she hungered after words. Furthermore, the unreality of the surroundings began to oppress her. She felt as though she were losing her identity. Some power beyond seemed to be drawing her outside of herself, back into the universal spirit. Suddenly she seemed to become a part of the earth and the water, the air and the flame; a quickened part of the sentient life that swam and flew, that glided and breathed about her; there would be relief in the sound of a human voice.

"I did not know that you were afraid of Indians," she spoke tauntingly when she could stand it no longer. Answer there was none, save the crackling of burning branches, the hungry, hot-breathed roar of the flames as they licked out the rich heart of the forest. "I think that I would rather prefer being scalped by savages to being roasted alive. This is



protracted torture; at best the daylight will find us here. Every moment is hateful to me," she soliloquized.

Captain Maynard shifted uneasily in his saddle; a moment later he dismounted. Damaris heard the squelching of his boots as he floundered in the black ooze of the swamp. Having tried it unsuccessfully in various directions, he came back and stood by his horse in thought. Afterwards he went close to the burning tree and tried to kick off the upmost branches, but a shower of sparks and burning twigs enveloped him, sending him back to his horse with scorched garments and smarting eyes.

A half hour more of tense silence. In the distance the cry of a wolf. A deer leaped out of the swamp and ran down the road behind them. The branches burned lower; like fiery fingers they stood above the tree some three feet high. Damaris measured the fiery hurdle with her eye.

"Now I am going home!" she cried defiantly, and before her companion could even guess at the reckless thing she would do, she put Comet into a swinging canter and rode to the log. The beautiful creature paused and quivered for a moment before the blazing hurdle. Damaris's hand was upon his neck, she raised herself in her stirrup, then at a word he gathered himself together and with a splendid bound cleared the cordon of fire.

The hearts of the two men behind her stood in their throats, a madder or a more beautiful sight they had never seen—the scarlet flames licked at her flowing skirts and tongued the red-gold flanks of her horse as he cleared the hedge of fire.

Captain Maynard put spurs to his horse to follow, but even as he did so the burning trunk suddenly shivered, grew dull and fell away from the upward branches, and with an easy bound he cleared the glowing log, Sergeant McLeod following him.

"Heavens, what nerve! She always was confidently plucky," said Maynard to himself when he could think. He tried to laugh, but the muscles in his throat were stiff and hard. How a laugh would have eased him. His eyes were those of a man who had looked upon death at a hand's breadth, and there was a numbness in his limbs and a coldness at his heart. He would not, however, gratify Damaris by showing either surprise or condemnation, but treated it as a matter of no concern when he overtook her, and there was no trace of disturbance in his face.

"I think we may reach home in less than an hour," he said quietly. "I am truly sorry that this ride was so unfortunately prolonged. This last mischance could not have been foreseen, and at worst 'twas better than the risk of the other. I am glad that the ride is nearly ended."

"Then we are quits."

"As you say."

There came another silence. Martin Maynard was trying to find words for the feeling that was fast mastering him. She had goaded him to desperation, flouted and reviled him, met him with anger and unreason at every turn, yet such is the heart of man, such the power of a woman's personality, such the unsettling forces of proximity and isolation, that strongly and more strongly she had

been drawing him to her during the hours of forced companionship, and now in a moment the whole energies of his nature were bent upon accomplishing that which he had solemnly sworn never to do again. He rested his hand upon her saddle and began in a voice not quite sure of itself.

"May we not start over again, Damaris, you and I?"

"Right willingly, albeit we start at the opposite poles of the earth," she answered disdainfully, ignoring the pleading manhood in his eyes.

"See here, Damaris," he continued unabashed, for the spirit of conquest had risen strongly within him now that his resolve was taken, "you shall listen to me, listen to the end. A truce to jesting, I am no be-ribboned dandy who lives upon bandied words. It were well enough to laugh and play when one's heart is light; mine has been heavy for many a day. I have sometimes thought that I was a little hard upon you that night, a little unwise to force an issue there and then when your thoughts were full of your triumphs. Perchance I was not fair, but it is hard for a man to be fair with a woman, she is so different; and what means so much to her means so little to him. Furthermore, when a man is in love he does not see quite clearly the things that concern his happiness. Something that you said back yonder to-night has set me a-thinking. Somewhere, I think, there must be something wrong. You mean more than you say, allude to something I cannot understand. I am slower of wit, I cannot follow you. I love you, Damaris, and love is more than pride. I will do or say anything that you ask. Do as you

will with me, only love me. If there is anything that I can set straight, tell me and give me another chance."

"You have had your chance," she answered lightly, though her heart had bounded as a bird from the net of the fowler at the thought of a possible explanation of all that was terrible in the past.

"A man needs a thousand chances with a woman such as you, and would try for them all as he would for his life!" he pleaded warmly.

"You have lost your chance," she answered, perversely playing with the issue to gain time from her fluttering heart's insistence.

"I will find it again," he answered stoutly. He threw back his head and his voice rang with the pride that a man feels when he thinks that he sees the hoped-for goal in sight.

That note of pride worked his undoing. It wakened again her pride, which had been so near the point of surrender. In a moment she had hardened her heart against him as in the day of provocation. As a great wave that sweeps over a country and destroys its landmarks, so the isolation and loneliness of the forest had blotted out the past for a time, levelled its barriers and made an open sea over which they might pass. Now the waves receded swiftly and bared the rugged distance between them.

Anger at the thought of her temporary weakness made her reckless.

"I have other views," she answered haughtily, "views that hold no thought of you."

“So I feared,” he answered miserably, blinded by his love from a clearer view of the situation. “I am a fool—just your plaything, nothing more. God forgive me, but I was glad to be played with. I never had a chance from the first save to amuse you. What is love to you? A pastime, nothing more. Think of it, ye mighty men of old!” he ended with savage scorn, straightening himself in the saddle and swinging out his long, strong arms. “Six feet of solid bone and brawn, a strong hand and red blood, just a woman’s careless plaything to be brushed aside as a fly when he buzzes too loudly in my lady’s ear!”

Hurt she was. A choking hurt that stopped her words and made her sway in her saddle. All the waters of bitterness rolled over her head and dimmed her vision. His angry eyes were set hard in the distance, he did not see the drawn face nor the wavering hand, and so with a woman’s pride she gathered herself together again and went on bravely in the wrong way where all was darkness before her, shutting her heart and eyes to the light that had been so near.

And so, like mariners who mistake the beacon, they drifted out again upon the troubled sea.

Just without the gates of the town they came upon a body of men headed by the Governor. They rode in grim silence, heavily armed. The Governor was the first to recognize the three figures riding toward them, and Damaris, seeing him, instantly called out gaily with a glad cry:

"Oh, father, such a fine adventure have we had! It was vastly diverting—Indians and rattlesnakes and forest fires. I feel like a frontiersman!"

"Thank God you are safe!" exclaimed the Governor, and in the sight of them all clasped her in his arms, and then there crowded about her those joyful men who had set grim faces toward the forest in search of her, with they knew not what of foreboding in their hearts.

Mr. Yonge was there with his admiration and jest, Mr. Allein with his hearty welcome, Mr. Skrine with vociferous sighs of thankfulness, his pudgy hand glued fast to his heart; Sir Hovenden Walker, too, and Mr. Maynard; indeed, well-nigh all the gentlemen of distinction in the town, besides a troop of Colonial cavalry.

"Gramercy, gentlemen, you make me feel quite a person of quality!"

"And so you are, since it takes all the King's horses and all the King's men to fetch you," said Francis Yonge.

"And glad am I to be fetched. Your consideration touches me greatly, gentlemen; I would I could thank you in fitting words," she said with a tremor in her voice, smiling around upon them.

"Next to our Governor is his daughter," said Mr. Allein.

"It is an honor. It is a pleasure. There is no need of thanks. Your safety is thanks enough," cried one and all.

"Nay, Mistress Damaris, were you not giving us pain it would scarcely be your fair self. Frail

woman is ever the disturber of our peace," added Mr. Yonge.

"And point for your wit," she answered promptly.

"And theme of our song and heart of our story," he retorted.

"Marry, Yonge, a truce to your nonsense; we would hear the story of their adventure."

And the story was told with comment and exclamation. At the mention of Indians there was great heat to be after them straightway, the Governor himself proposing to lead them.

"Pardon me, your Honor, but I would suggest that you ride homeward with Mistress Damaris, who is somewhat spent, and with your permission, and that of these gentlemen, I will lead them to the spot where the rascals harbored. Mayhap we may come upon some trace of them or their mischief."

This plan being agreeable to the general humor, Governor Johnson wrung Captain Maynard's hand with repeated words of gratitude. Mistress Damaris bade a gracious good-night to the party, with downcast eyes spoke a few courteous words to Captain Maynard, then side by side with the Governor turned her face toward the town with a sigh of relief.

## CHAPTER XIV

### FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH

"Our business is like men to fight,  
And hero-like to die."

—*Motherwell.*

The sultry months of July and August had passed quietly and uneventfully for the colonists, but with the coming of September were renewed alarms, and because no assurances of assistance had been received from England a vast discontent was openly voiced among the people of the Province. Meanwhile, along the coasts the pirates held not their hand—under the black flag the seas were pillaged from South to North.

When Captain Rogers took possession of New Providence in the King's name, July, 1718, he broke up a veritable den of pirates who had consorted there in undisturbed security. There they brought in their rich prizes, there they careened their vessels, and from thence they sallied forth upon their free-booting expeditions. Upon the coming of Captain Rogers the majority of the pirates availed themselves of the King's pardon proclaimed for a twelve-month, and supposedly devoted themselves to lawful avocations.

The notorious Charles Vane, however, found himself of small mind to become an honest man. When



he discovered himself to be actually penned within the bay he had the effrontery to write to Captain Rogers and propose to surrender, provided he should first receive permission to dispose of his booty. Receiving no promise, he decided to escape. Two of Rogers's ships awaited him, however, with which he exchanged shots, but managed to escape after a warm brush, getting away with ninety men in a sloop belonging to one of his officers, one Captain Yeates, making thereupon straightway for the Carolina coast, which was for some time to be the scene of great piratical activity.

In purging the West Indies of these pestilent freebooters it but narrowed the scene of their operations to the coast of the mainland. From Delaware to South Carolina now became their running, from the highways and by-ways of the seas they steered for the Pamlico and Cape Fear rivers, which became henceforward their headquarters. It is stated by some, upon indifferent authority, however, that Governor Eden, of North Carolina, was himself in collusion with Black Beard and his robbers. Certain damaging papers did come to light upon the death of that rogue, which were never quite explained to the public satisfaction.

The Province of South Carolina was not herself entirely beyond suspicion at an earlier date. Certain goods and monies were current in the land, of which the customs took no note, and their origin is not difficult of explication, considering her situation. Upon the seas, due to strife among nations, were certain legalized robbers known as privateers, and between privateering and piracy exists but a national

difference, as it were. Pirates rob for themselves, privateers in the name of their country. During the end of the Seventeenth and beginning of the Eighteenth Century all of the European nations seemed to be at war with each other, and the consequent deterioration of individual character was the unfortunate result. Naturally the American colonies, being less protected, were the victims of this universal robbery. Charles Town, to indemnify herself somewhat for her losses, showed too great indulgence to these marauders. The wealth brought in by the pirates did much to obtain friends for them and screen them from justice; 'twas further asserted that, bribed by them, the justices gave false judgments. In their endeavor to crush the pirates the Proprietors gave word to Governor Ludlow that they should be tried by the English laws of piracy. With a corrupt jury and corrupt lawyers it came to pass that several pirates escaped justice, bought lands and settled in South Carolina. Spain, who carried on considerable commerce with her colonies in New Spain, complained that South Carolina harbored injurious pirates who crippled her commerce. In revenge she incited the Indians against the Carolinians and demoralized their negroes. Finally an indemnity was given by the Proprietors to all pirates who had not depredated upon Spain, and so the difficulty was adjusted between the two colonies.

Now since the Proclamation, into the Cape Fear River swarmed the ruthless robbers, many of whom had taken oath and accepted the King's pardon. Among these latter Stede Bonnet, a remarkable and redoubtable pirate, once a Barbadian gentleman of

education and wealth, who, in company with Black Beard, had visited Charles Town in June, since which time his career had been somewhat checkered even for a gentleman of fortune. After leaving Charles Town the contention that had existed between Black Beard and Bonnet culminated in open rupture in Topsail Inlet. Bonnet, resuming the command of the *Revenge*, sailed away to Bath Town in North Carolina, surrendered to the King's pardon and received a certificate. The war having broken out between the Triple Allies and Spain, Major Bonnet gets clearance for his ship, and with the open design of sailing to St. Thomas, there to procure a commission to privateer upon the Spaniard, departs from North Carolina. Straight to Topsail Inlet sails he. Black Beard has gone, but there he finds seventeen men abandoned by him to the intent that they shall perish. To these Bonnet tells of his mission to St. Thomas, and invites them to join him. Hearing from a bom-boat bringing provisions that Captain Thatch (Black Beard) lay at Okericock Inlet, Bonnet, who bears him a mortal hatred born of past wrongs and insults, pursues him straitly. To their chagrin the enemy has gone, but they spend four or five days in search-cruising, then steer for the Virginia coast.

During the month of July they were not slow in availing themselves of many prizes from South Carolina upwards to Delaware, for now, under the name of Thomas, Bonnet returned to his old trade with renewed activity, and during the month of July took in all twelve junks, schooners and snows, most of which vessels he turned loose after taking from

them money and all desirable provisions. The last day of July he left Delaware Bay with the two vessels last taken and sailed for the Cape Fear River.

While tarrying here some time they discovered that their ship, now called the *Royal James*, was in unsound condition, requiring more than a month for refitting.

To Charles Town came the alarming information that a pirate ship was careened in Cape Fear River, whereupon prevailed the greatest excitement, the people being convinced that the time for action had finally arrived. Burning with revenge because of old insults and injuries, apprehensive of future depredations, and anxious to protect their commerce that would soon recommence, the whole will and energy of the town turned to this pressing exigency.

From England had come no help. Still impoverished by two recent Indian wars there was a scant treasury, but the Governor, Council and people determined to stretch every resource to their service rather than calmly await another visitation.

Col. William Rhett, a bold and able seaman and soldier, waited upon the Governor and offered to go against the pirate. Rumor, he said, declared that the pirate had ten guns and sixty desperate, trained men, but if the Governor would fit him out two sloops he would engage to meet them.

The commission was joyfully given to Colonel Rhett. Two sloops he chose—the *Henry*, Capt. John Masters, and the *Sea Nymph*, Capt. Fayrer Hall. The *Henry* he selected as his flagship. She was fitted with eight guns and seventy men; the

*Sea Nymph* being likewise fitted with eight guns and sixty men.

With the Governor's permission Captain Maynard waited upon Colonel Rhett and asked to accompany him. Colonel Rhett accepted gladly the services of one who was not only a sterling soldier, but who was the more eager because of personal grievance to redress.

September the 10th, the day chosen for the departure, dawned bright with a freshening westerly wind that made the full running sea look like the jagged edges of chipped green-glass bottles.

Upon the deck of the *Henry* stood Colonel Rhett, upon the *Sea Nymph* Captain Maynard. Along the sea-front crowded an enthusiastic people, who cheered and shouted and waved.

Well to the front, by the Governor's side, stood Damaris, white-faced and wide-eyed, though she answered Mr. Yonge's sallies with a smile. Lady Kildare and Mr. Yonge had most of the conversation to themselves. In grave and absolute silence, but with kindling eye, stood the Governor. So absorbed was he in the importance of the occasion that he did not feel how cold Damaris's little hand was as it lay in his arm.

The Governor raised his hand and gave the signal, a cornet hard by blew the bugle call, from Granville's Bastion sounded the gun of departure, then cordage creaked, canvas bellied, chains rattled, anchors were lifted, a loud huzzah went up from the crowd, somewhere a woman was sobbing, the stir of the excited crowd filled the air.

Suddenly, as the boats swung their noses seaward, a little West Indian trader ran hard a-port of the *Henry* and hailed her. She was from Antigua, her captain one Cook of that port. She reported that she had been captured and robbed by one of the most notorious pirates, the redoubtable Charles Vane, lately escaped from Captain Rogers at new Providence, and now lay off Charles Town bar in a stout brigantine of twelve guns and ninety men.

Outside of Charles Town Vane had captured two in-bound vessels—one a Barbadian sloop, the other a Guinea-man with over ninety negroes. The negroes were removed from the brigantine and placed on board of a sloop mastered by Yeates, a consort of Vane's. Yeates, finding himself so well fitted out, deserted. Vane, discovering the treachery, pursued, but finding no trace of him returned to Charles Town, where he had proceeded to overhaul four vessels bound for London, two of which had escaped and continued their voyage.

Keener than ever for the pursuit, yet made uncertain of his course by the information received, Rhett gave the signal for the return and came-about, to the great consternation of the anxious onlookers on the shore.

Colonel Rhett held a conference with the Governor and it was decided to delay the departure for several days, awaiting further information, it being deemed unwise to attack the pirate in the open.

Again, upon September 15th, amid cheers and huzzahs, Colonel Rhett set sail. Having been informed by Cook that Vane had planned to run into an inlet to the southward to repair, he scoured the

neighboring creeks and rivers, but without success. Finally he decided that the pirate had sailed away, and without returning to the port to consult with Governor Johnson, he headed for the Cape Fear River.

While Rhett sought his foe among islands and headlands, the town was again thrown into the wildest alarm by tidings that pirates had landed to the southward. Later it proved that Vane, weary of his precarious life, had put into the North Edisto River, and from thence sent word that if allowed to take the oath of allegiance he would deliver up the negroes. With assurance of consent he complied with the terms.

It was about the 20th of September when Rhett finally sailed for the Cape Fear. With smooth seas and favorable winds he made a quick run, sighting upon the evening of the 20th the great Cape headland, but now was he overtaken with a great misfortune. The mouth of the Cape Fear is thick-set with sand-bars, making it dangerous of navigation, and so it proved to the expedition, for being in the hands of a worthless pilot both sloops were run aground just as they sighted the topmasts of the pirate and his prizes lying at anchor.

With this disastrous happening, swore and raged the men with Berserk wrath. Even at this distance they could hardly be restrained from firing at the pirate's black hulks, and would have jumped overboard and with knives in their teeth have boarded their enemy right willingly.

Never before was tide so slow in the rising. With straining eyes the anxious men watched the slow-

rising water line about their keel, and with every throb of the boat as she loosened from her grounding a shout of joy went up.

Meantime they had been speedily spied by the ever-alert pirates, who, thinking them vessels of traffic, manned straightway three canoes and sent to take them. However, when they discovered the formidable guns of the grounded vessels, they changed their design and returned with the unwelcome tidings to their ship.

Greatly incensed was the audacious free-booter that Carolina should dare send an expedition against him, so long had he arrogated to himself the sovereignty of the seas; and being a gentleman of polite education, he set to work to write an insulting letter which he purposed sending to Governor Johnson should he escape, and which he showed to Captain Mainwaring, one of his prisoners. The final clause of the said letter was to the effect that if the sloops which then appeared were sent out against him by the said Governor, and he should get off clear, that he would burn and destroy all ships and vessels going in and coming out of South Carolina.

Major Bonnet, now Captain Thomas, having vented his spleen in manner polite, forthwith turned himself to the bettering of his condition. First he took all the men out of the prizes, and the remainder of the night was spent in active preparation, for with the dawn he anticipated an attack.

Upon the *Henry* and the *Sea Nymph*, where active preparations were ended, the men lay all night upon their arms.



Captain Maynard did not sleep. Through the night watches he passed from point to point of his vessel, satisfying himself that all was in readiness. Softly he passed through the sleeping men who lay about the decks wrapped in their blankets, some of them sleeping their last sleep, he thought, as he stepped aside to examine a gun.

The darkness shivered as the daylight lay chill hands upon it and drew it back into nothingness. Captain Maynard, sitting upon the poop of his vessel, drew a deep breath and passed his hand through his hair, heavy with the callow dew-damp. He had thought much during the long night watches, and since he had last lain at close quarters with the pirates much experience had come to him; he found it hard to realize that he was the same man who had raged against Damaris and sworn vengeance against the pirates as he lay in hateful durance. Now the anger against Damaris had passed as the night watches—in its place the chill dawn of a new hurt. He wondered how he could ever have forgiven her and still be a man. Man speaks of himself as one person when he is in truth more persons than the sum of all of his ancestors. He is one person until experience changes him into another, and so repeats the process, and so he goes on losing illusions and gaining self-knowledge, always sadder, sometimes wiser.

Captain Maynard watched the white morning star and thought of Damaris. With clear-shining beauty it sank behind the wraith of sea mist; even so had she passed beyond the horizon of his hopes. He shook himself hard, settled his cap on his head and

passed from man to man, waking them with a touch of his foot.

A token of the day, blood red the sun lifted above the sea on September 27, and the watching eyes upon the Carolinians saw the great sails of the *Royal James* bellying in the breeze, heard across the still waters, over which passed long lines of screaming water fowl, the creaking and groaning of hawser and cordage as the pirate weighed anchor. Briskly the trim nose of the *Royal James* came about, out she swung into the current, with the flapping of slackened canvas, then catching the spanking breeze blowing stiff from the land, came flying toward the river mouth, hoping to show her stronger foe a clean pair of heels.

Colonel Rhett, quickly appreciating the pirate's purpose, commanded that the *Henry* and *Sea Nymph* should fall into position to board her larboard and starboard. Seeing which, the pirate, trusting to her knowledge of the currents, edged close into shore, and in the confusion of the tremendous broadsides that belched upon her from both sides, lost her heading, grounding hard and fast in the shoal water.

Too close upon her quarter for prudence came Rhett, and straightway grounded upon his bow within pistol shot, the *Henry* in the heat of the encounter having grounded ahead of the pirate, almost out of range.

Colonel Rhett stood at his post and watched the great hull of the *Royal James* right itself with a shivering lurch, then settle slowly over, till her deck was turned from her pursuers, her men under shelter. With the same current lifted the *Henry* the same

way, exposing her deck to the fire of the pirate. For five long hours, while the tide turned, lay she there keeping up an incessant fire, though the pirate's broadsides swept her decks which ran with the blood of the wounded and dying.

Blackened with powder and smarting with smoke stood Rhett, and above the noise of carnage rose his strong, calm voice, commanding and encouraging the men, who stood to their work with grim determination, while through the rigging hissed and whistled the shot, about them fell shattered cordage, around them flew great splinters torn from bulwarks and deck by the close and murderous fire—but never a heart failed during those deadly hours.

The pirates, gloating over their advantage, hauled down their sinister flag with grinning skull and cross-bones, making therein a wiff, and raising it shouted in derision to their foes:

“Come over, come over! Don't keep our knives waiting longer for your blood! Come over, we are ready! Come on; don't be afraid! We would wash our decks with your white blood!”

“We will speak with you by and by! We will color the sea with your black blood!” shouted back a Carolinian, and straightway fell to work more zealously.

A sudden shiver ran through the *Henry*; with a swinging lurch she righted herself. A shout of joy sprung from hoarse throats, quick hands fell to mending the rigging, while the crestfallen pirates, who still stuck hard aground, looked to themselves with alarm.

Around swung the *Henry*, and with savage yells hard she stood for the pirate's quarter, purposing straightway to board her. Grimly stood the men to their arms, ready to board her as they grappled; hard by the *Sea Nymph*, also freed, took up her position with equal purpose, and the pirate's plight was indeed desperate.

Upon the deck of the *Royal James* stood Stede Bonnet, a smoking pistol in each hand. Brave as a lion stood he, confronting his mutinous men, inciting them to resistance to the death. The men fell away from him with surly countenances, muttering rebelliously among themselves.

"By God!" roared Bonnet as he saw himself forsaken, "I will blow out the brains and spit the heart of the first infernal coward who dares speak of surrender!" The scowling crew confronted him with threatening faces and no sign of support.

"Miserable hell-hounds that you are! Curse you for a pack of cowards! If you dare give up the ship without a fight I will light the powder house and send you quick to hell!"

They closed about him with bare arms and threatening gestures, determined to thwart him and save themselves by surrender, for the death that seems far off looks the easier. Then fell Bonnet to persuading and bribing, but all to no purpose. The grimy, almost naked rogues, who held with him in prosperity, forsook him at need. Baffled and furious, he had to succumb to their power, and a flag of truce was sent to the *Henry*.

After somewhat tedious parley the *Royal James* surrendered unconditionally, and to the great joy of

Colonel Rhett he found that the so-called Captain Thomas was their ancient foe Stede Bonnet, against whom the Colony had a long and weighty reckoning, as had also the whole Atlantic coast, the Bahamas and New Spain, together with the commerce of England, Spain and France.

The *Royal James* was manned by Rhett's men, the prisoners put into irons, the two prizes—the *Fortune* and the *Francis* taken into possession.

Scornfully stood the great Bonnet while the irons were fastened upon his crew. "Dastardly villains! You have bought them for yourselves with your cowardice. And you had fought like men you would not be shackled like slaves!"

Black-browed and mutinous still, they glowered at him as they passed in clanking irons to the hold, the bare feet of some leaving bloody prints upon the deck, their hairy bodies blackened and stained with blood and powder, their long hair singed and matted.

When the last treacherous rogue had passed he turned his eagle eyes upon his captors, and held out his wrists contemptuously to them.

"Not so," spoke Colonel Rhett quickly. "You have fought like a brave man and a gentleman; we will spare you that indignity."

"I stand or fall with my comrades," he answered proudly, still extending his hands.

"You are of better mettle, though an outlaw. This indulgence we give you. Pass within to your cabin."

"I thank you for your courtesy," replied Major Bonnet, and passed within with the air of an unfortunate gentleman.

The *Henry*, which had grounded nearest the pirate, lost ten killed and fourteen wounded, several of whom afterwards died. Upon the *Sea Nymph* were but two killed and fourteen wounded. Of the pirates there were but seven killed and two wounded, inasmuch as the careening of their vessel had sheltered them from fire, the *Henry's* shots but taking effect in her hulk.

From the Carolinians a full crew, well armed, put ashore in a long-boat to bury their dead comrades. All other available hands were put to work to repair the *Henry's* damages, which were not inconsiderable.

Captain Maynard being transferred to the *Royal James*, busied himself straightway with getting her into shape. Behind a gun, by a pile of cordage, a wounded pirate lay unobserved. Several times Captain Maynard was addressed by name as he stood close by directing the repairs. The wounded man raised himself slowly upon his elbow.

"Say, Captain Maynard, ship ahoy!" he cried hoarsely.

Captain Maynard came to him and leaned over him. It was clear that death already looked out of the glazing eyes.

"Is your name Captain Maynard, and come you from Charles Town? Were you but shortly in *The Indian Emperor* when she was overhauled?" he asked, breathing heavily.

"Yes," answered Maynard, astonished.

"Then have I a love-token for you."

Captain Maynard, thinking that his mind did but wander in the death-grasp, looked at him com-

passionately. Painfully the pirate drew from the inner pocket of his doublet a leathern case.

"Open," he spoke feebly.

Thinking it some dying token that he wished sent to some friend, Maynard complied. Within lay a spray of withered leaves that crumbled at his touch; also, detached, a crimson flower, empurpled and bruised.

"Tell her I kept faith," he gasped. "I couldn't meet my yellow-haired lass in hell if I had lied to your lady."

"What does it all mean? Tell me quick!" urged Maynard hoarsely, lifting up the limp form in his arms to stay the rattling breath.

"Something—something—I can't quite get it up my hatches," he said, feeling painfully around the darkening chambers of his memory. "I promised her I would give it to you when I went back to the ship. Too much rum—at the Three Swans—another wench—dumped into the hold like a dog—sleep—sleep—when I came out *Emperor* gone—our ship here—something—something—promise—promise—summer has come—no winter—I am cold—down with the hatches!" and the light faded in the dark places of the pirate's soul.

Still kneeling by the dead man's side, Captain Maynard looked upon the shattered blossom in his hand. Five months of sorrow were burned out in one flash of joy, out of the darkness came blinding light. A vast compassion for the shame the girl must have suffered swept over his soul and left him trembling. About him the swish of the water where the men mopped up the blood-stains from the deck;

aloft in the rigging a sailor spliced a shivered yard-arm, hammering vigorously; the twilight brushed away the purple bloom from the sea and a fog from the place of shadows stole its chill arms about them. Tenderly Captain Maynard closed the leathern case that had lain against the pirate's heart for so many months. Gently he folded the rigid hands and composed the stiffening limbs. Upon the still face death had lain its inscrutable smile, had smoothed out the passions and left it calm.

Two men approached.

"Curse him, he's swallowed his last booty!" said one. "Hell is glad to-night!" the other laughed loudly. "Lend a hand, mate; we'll toss him to the sharks."

"Not so fast, comrades," said Captain Maynard quietly. "Wrap him in a tarpaulin; we will bury him ashore."

The two sailors gazed at him in unconcealed wonder.

"Friend, Captain?" asked one with a knowing wink, for in those days there were curious bonds of friendship.

"Yes, a friend," replied Captain Maynard gravely. "He was true to his word; he is better than his craft; we will give him a decent burial. That much I can pay him, at least. May God have mercy upon his soul!"



## CHAPTER XV

### TROUBLES

"One woe doth tread upon another's heel,  
So fast they follow."

—*Hamlet.*

The heavy September air, rich with the hot breath of ripening things, came into the open windows of the dining-room.

Over the sultry sea shimmered its languors of mist. Out of the garden arose the multiple stir and hum of creative life that sung to its finish.

Before one low window, looking seaward, stood Damaris, her hands all ablaze with scarlet geraniums with which she was filling a tall loving-cup. About the casement clung the heavy coils of a crimson trumpet vine, in and out of its leafage darting chameleons vivid as gems.

Cool and fragile looked the girl in her soft white gown; very delicate her face, with traces of languorous violet about the clear grey eyes.

"You poor, faithful, fiery things," she said, as she thrust in a long-stemmed truss of blossoms. "Of all the goodly company of flowers you bloom the most faithfully these sultry days. Dear me, it is a weary world; I feel as if I had finished blooming myself!"

She leaned her head against the window and looked over the sea with wistful eyes. At the sound of a footstep without in the hall she started quickly from her reverie, touched the bell to summon breakfast and turned to greet her father.

"Good-morning, father; we wear the King's scarlet to-day," she said, lifting the cup by its two handles and holding it flush with her white throat.

"Monstrous gay," answered the Governor, somewhat abstractedly, moving over to the window.

"You forgot to kiss me. Art afraid of the King's scarlet?" she asked archly.

"Do you reckon upon nothing but kisses and cajoleries, Damaris?" asked the Governor gravely.

"From you, certainly not, my Sire; all else would be vastly unfatherly," she replied, puzzling somewhat over his words, and dropping her blossoms to the level of her heart.

"Do you never expect to be in earnest in your life? Comes life but to you as a jest?"

"When one is young one must be glad, one laughs in the sunshine; after a while one will weep in the shadows." Her vase hung low from her straining fingers now, her eyes looked beyond her father to the vague, stretching sea.

"To laugh while others weep is not a part of youth, nor is it womanly," he replied severely.

"One laughs while one may," she spoke a little bitterly.

"Grow you never weary of this ceaseless round of coquetry? Each day brings some new tidings of your reckless flirtations."

"Seek the cat," Damaris said to herself, while she cast about to discover with which one of her lady friends her father had probably been conversing. Aloud she said: "Is flirtation then so very reprehensible? I have ever looked upon it as my only protection against matrimony. Truly, I have regarded it as a kindly provision of Nature to insure one's affections—from premature capitulation!"

"Flirtation is abominable!" he answered hotly.

"Faith, would you have me marry, sir?" she asked in alarm.

"I would have you conduct yourself as a woman of character!"

"What do you mean, father?" she asked with sudden gravity, looking steadily into his eyes.

"Even this, Damaris—you have misused your liberty. You had no mother, I had no son; too much as a son have I treated you, forgetting that women cannot stand too much freedom. I wanted you to be happy, I trusted you implicitly, and now meseems you have taken the bit into your own teeth and grown somewhat heady. Your delight seems but in coquetry. The town rings with the stories of your flirtations, like a battledore rumor flings your heart from one man's keeping to that of another. Think you this is the conduct of a dignified woman?"

"And so my father lends ear to the idle rumor of the town?" she asked proudly.

"Nay, not so. To the idle tongue of gossip I give no heed; the carpings of tabbies pecking at reputations over their teacups are an abomination unto

me; but what I have seen, Damaris, that I know. Some few weeks since you gave every indication that Captain Maynard engaged your affections, and in my heart I was glad, seeing that I would rather give you to him than to another, since give you up I must, sooner or later. He is every whit white, not a shadow of uncleanness within or without. None knows better than you what a pretty game of pitch and toss you have played with his heart, and now you do divert yourself even as gaily with Mr. Yonge, who is ever a-dangling at your apron strings."

"The heart of Mr. Yonge is not a very breakable toy, 'twill never cause him any uneasiness."

"A most paltry and a most womanish excuse!"

"The truth should ever be a woman's excuse."

"There you do wrong Mr. Yonge. Whatever the fickleness of the sometime affairs of his heart, you have won his affections, beyond dispute!"

"I protest, sir, you frighten me; the zeal of your cause has perchance spoiled your judgment!" she fenced with assumed lightness.

"Would that it were so; but by my soul, this time Francis Yonge has staked his all for better or worse!"

"Has he so spoken to you?" she asked with growing uneasiness.

"He who runs may read!"

"'Tis a fool who wears his heart on his sleeve for daws to peck at."

"When they love, all men are such."

"And yet expect women to love them?"

“Egad, any man who expects you to love him for more than a week is certainly a fool!”

“I protest, sir; I cannot honestly love all the men who are foolish enough to fancy they love me. Idleness breeds lovers as stagnant water gnats.”

“Good women have few lovers.”

“Happy women have but one!” she answered sadly.

She had put down her heavy vase of flowers and her eyes were fixed upon the bruises made by the carven handles upon her fingers. Something in her voice made the Governor scan her face sharply. Its look of delicate whiteness startled him. He stepped over and slipped his arm about her and his voice was very gentle when he spoke.

“Truly, I would not be harsh with my little girl; mayhap my words were harder than I intended, but being a man I have small patience with these travesties of love. Prithee, give me a kiss, and let us forget! Now we must have breakfast, as an early appointment awaits me.”

“Nay, the kiss that is forgotten is forfeit!” she said, trying to speak lightly; however, she received the peace-offering with indifferent warmth and took her place behind the urn. It were easier for her father to forget than for her. That moment when we stand for the first time face to face with the fact that we are not perfect in the eyes of one whom we love is a bitter one. The first word of dispraise is as the flaming sword that bars our re-entry into the secure paradise of our self-esteem.

"Take away those flowers, John," she said to the servant. "They are so vivid," she explained to the Governor, "they hurt my eyes."

The rest of the breakfast was passed as usual. With a cheery word the Governor went off to his appointment. Like a man he had made a wound, and like a man he poured into it the balm which he deemed healing, then like a man he wished it straightway forgotten, and took it for granted that it was.

With her bunch of keys jangling at her belt, her high red heels clicking the polished floor, her head a trifle higher than usual, her grey eyes deepening into purple, Damaris went the rounds of her house-keeping duties. In her was vested the authority of the establishment. John, the old butler, said that it sat loosely upon her, but at least she had the rare talent of seeing that the duties of others did not sit loosely upon them, and this is in truth the secret of a genuine housewife. She superintended the decanting of some cordial made from the wild plums of the Province, after a cunning recipe brought from the old country, and of which her father was particularly fond. Then the high-piled laundry baskets being brought in, she folded away the snowy linen in its lavender-scented shelves. Into his own basket, to be mended, she put the silken hose of her father, and his ruffles of French and Flemish laces, for in the matter of ruffles Mr. Yonge himself was not finer than the Governor.

The last of these little housewifely duties, so obnoxious to Lady Kildare, being ended, Damaris

was on the point of taking refuge with her troubled thoughts under the magnolias, when Mistress Dorothy Bowers was announced.

"Dear me," said Damaris to herself, "'tis a warm day for stratagem. I wonder what brings her, what does she want to find out, or what she has to tell me? Nothing pleasant, I'll warrant. The Ides of March have fallen in September this year, methinks." She took up her basket with a sigh and went in to greet her guest.

In the cool dusk of the darkened drawing-room Mistress Dorothy rose to greet her hostess. Like a splendid rose carnation she looked in a gown all frills and furbelows, laces and streamers, and perfumed like a flower with the dainty art of France.

"How very delightful to find you at home, my sweet Damaris. I came early, hoping for such good fortune. Now we shall have a charming long morning together. See, I have in my reticule the sweetest bit of embroidery newly come from London!"

"So very good of you to come; so very brave, too, this sultry morning; pray be seated," said Damaris with the virtuous hypocrisy of a well-bred woman, and flung open a window that they might have light for their needlework. After duly admiring the new fashion in embroidery, she drew forth from her basket one of the long grey silken hose.

"'Pon my life, Damaris, you really frighten me—men's hose in your basket; how can you be so ungentle?"

Damaris ran her hand deep into the stocking until one of her pink fingers protruded from the toe.

"Methinks 'twere vastly more ungenteel to allow my father to wear unmended hose," she answered, laughing.

"But surely there are menials enough in the Governor's establishment for such labors!"

"Not for labors of love such as this; besides, I always feel so important when I am reinforcing the Governor."

"'Tis a monstrous waste of time," said Mistress Dorothy, shaking her head disapprovingly and continuing to set placid stitches into the pink leg of a vaulting Cupid designed for a fire-screen.

Then the conversation darted and doubled, woman fashion; before one answer was fairly sped, came another hot-foot upon it; meanwhile the legs of the pink Cupid fattened beyond human semblance and the toes of the Governor were safely housed in silk.

Then a servant fetched a waiter high piled with cakes and fruits and sweetmeats, and while they sipped their tea and nibbled their dainties the conversation flagged not.

"'Twill be a happy day when the *Henry* and *Sea Nymph* come home," said Mistress Dorothy tentatively as she fingered a bunch of purple grapes.

"For the pirates?" asked Damaris innocently.

"For some who wait at home with anxious hearts."

"Truly," said Damaris sympathetically, "I had not thought on it thus; mayhap many of our brave soldiers have left families behind them."

"To me the time has been vastly trying!" sighed Mistress Dorothy deeply.



"I am greatly concerned to learn that your kindred are among them."

"Not kindred exactly," said Mistress Dorothy coyly, the while from under her silken lashes she swept one searching look at her companion; but frank, innocent eyes met her gaze, and a look of absolute insouciance. "But there is among them one who should be nearer to me than kith and kin."

"A lover?" inquired the other blandly.

"Such the world calls him; but when he bade me farewell and urged the dangers into which he would run, even then I could not find it in my heart to say the word he craved; but when he comes back, who can tell—? Absence proves a woman's heart, and Captain Maynard—"

"So 'tis Captain Maynard who has won your favor. Allow me to offer my wishes for great happiness with that excellent gentleman," said Damaris frankly.

"Nay, be quiet, I pray you; the name did but slip unheeded from my lips. 'Tis a matter in which my heart still wavers, and for worlds would I not have it given over to the gossips!" she said, blushing more rosy than her carnation gown, and with a pretty assumption of modesty that sat vastly well upon her.

"Have no fears, the matter will not be mentioned by me," answered Damaris.

"Do you promise truly?"

"Certainly; why should I mention it?"

"You will oblige me greatly. Not so much as a hint even to the Captain himself that I have confided in you, because—because there's many a slip

'twixt the cup and the lip, and gossip is so disagreeable."

"Truly, it shall be as you wish. Ah, there comes a coach—Lady Kildare, upon my word. I am truly favored this morning."

"I really must be going," said the other, hastily rising and setting down her teacup noisily. "I have already wasted your time most shockingly, but we have had a sweet morning together." Miss Dorothy gathered her work and crushed it into her bag.

"Indeed, why should you say so; you have entertained me vastly. Good-morning, Lady Kildare, I am charmed to see you!"

"No doubt, no doubt; but you are ever more charmed to see me go away. Whom have we here? Ah, Mistress Dorothy Bowers; methought I smelled mischief, or perhaps it was musk—the two are easily confounded. What brings your complexion out into this glare?"

"I have been passing the morning with Damaris, and I am too distressed that I must be leaving just as you arrive," answered Mistress Dorothy, trying to appear at her ease.

"'Pon my conscience," replied the old lady, scrutinizing her loftily, "you do dissemble your reluctant distress under a most pleasing alacrity! I bid you good-morning."

"Good-morning, Lady Kildare. Your Ladyship jests so prettily it is a rare pleasure to meet you, and I trust soon again to have the good fortune. Good-by, dear Damaris; you have given me a sweet pleasure. Ah, you will come to the door with me,

will you?" And with a flutter of laces and streamers she bowed herself out.

"Satan needs a sight of vipers to carry on the work of human demoralization," soliloquized her Ladyship ill-humoredly. "Now if Tomahawk, as gossip would have it, had fallen in love with another than Mistress Dorothy I would not feel as if I had interfered with Providence; as it is, I feel as if I had helped him to fall into the pit digged for the wicked, and were it not bourgeois to repent of one's sins I would be almost sorry; however, he deserves it for falling in love again so speedily—it's genteel for men to make a decent semblance of mourning when jilted by a woman. It isn't fair for a man to rob a woman of the aftermath of conquest. Ah, Mistress Damaris, you have sped Delilah; now sit you down straightway, child, and tell me what makes you so pale. No, I won't have tea, child; there's to be no gossip, so 'tis not needed."

"It is truly the first time that I ever knew you to refuse tea."

"Don't comment upon your elders, Miss; it isn't genteel. You are as white as the veriest love-lorn damsel. I'll send you my rouge-pot, else folks will be making a romance of you. Gossip loves to break a woman's heart; it's like to say that you are grieving over Tomahawk's fickleness."

"It will not be its first unfounded lie!" replied Damaris hotly.

"Nor its last; society fattens upon such. What you need is a trip to England, and would you smile upon Mr. Yonge it could be so prettily arranged.

I have come to the conclusion, child, that despite your red lips you have great coldness of constitution, else you could not withstand such ardent wooing."

"Why is every one so anxious to marry me off and send me away? I am a very insignificant person and interfere with no one," the girl spoke wearily.

"Heyday, oh my conscience! A very insignificant person, indeed! Don't encourage small self-esteem, child; humility has no place in the social economy, it is only a virtue in parables. 'Pon my word, though, you had best dally no longer. If you keep on losing your complexion and your figure at this rate your beauty will be gone, then will Francis Yonge snap his fingers and seek a fairer."

"Then a man but wants a woman for her beauty?" asked Damaris scornfully.

"Certainly; for what else do you suppose—not for her ugliness, surely? Sometimes he needs her money enough to make him overlook appearances, but that is circumstantial accident."

"Are a woman's heart and a woman's soul to count as nothing?"

"A woman's heart and a woman's soul?" Lady Kildare tapped her high-heeled shoe on the floor and laughed mockingly.

"Rubbish, child, rubbish! To be a woman of fashion you must have neither. They are so shockingly démodé that in good society one does not suspect even one's enemies of having them. Beauty, audacity, a sharp tongue and a good digestion are all that

are necessary for social distinction. Such nonsense comes of your provincial breeding."

"It comes of my being a natural woman!"

"Natural woman! How prodigiously vulgar, child! I protest, you make me quite faint! I never could abide nature and naked truth—society décolletée is much more moral!" Lady Kildare leaned back with closed eyes, inhaling her scent-bottle.

Damaris rested her head against the chair and watched with weary eyes one long streak of sunshine that slipped in between the blinds and lay like a white bar athwart the polished floor between them. Meantime the sharp old eyes studied her furtively and unobserved. She had attacked the girl upon every side and had been baffled. There remained one point of attack, sacred to the scrupulous, but Lady Kildare was warm, tired and a little spiteful; she would nettle the girl a bit, not really hurt her—no, for forty Francis Yonges she would not do that.

"I believe that gossip is right!" she said suddenly.

"Wherein?" asked Damaris listlessly.

"Inasmuch as it has given your heart to one who leaves you a-grieving."

"Truly a most pitiful romance, and one worthy gossip's tear if it were true; but surely, Lady Kildare, you had the wisdom to deny it, since you know full well that I intend to marry Mr. Yonge." The girl spoke clearly, in a tone half mocking, but the white hands were clenched hard in her lap and the soles of her red slippers strained hard against the polished floor. Even as she spoke it seemed another

who spoke from within her, in a new voice, and the Damaris she used to be dwindled to a memory in that moment.

"I pray pardon, I returned to seek my thimble. 'Tis a rare one of gold, sent by my godmother from France, and I would not willingly lose it." The rose-carnation draperies of Mistress Dorothy fluttered in the doorway.

Lady Kildare, who had not recovered breath from Damaris's announcement, scowled upon the intruder and beat an angry rat-a-tat with her cane.

Damaris, all a-tremble, dropped down upon her knees in search of the missing thimble. Had she been overheard? she wondered miserably, while a flood of hot mortification and penitence swept over her. Mistress Dorothy's handsome eyes searched the dusky corners sedulously and gave no sign.

"Mistress Morton!" announced a servant, and a tall blonde woman entered, whereupon the two kneeling girls arose, as did also her Ladyship, and upon the exchange of greetings she announced:

"I must be going; affairs await me.

"Permit me to accompany you to your coach. 'Tis clear that my thimble was lost elsewhere," said Mistress Dorothy sweetly.

Lady Kildare grunted ungraciously. Damaris looked at her entreatingly.

"I prithee give no heed to the nonsense I have been talking; I was angered and silly," she said with tolerable indifference.

"Mercy on me, as if I ever gave heed to anything you say, seeing that you will declare the oppos-

ite on the morrow!" snapped her Ladyship. "Truly a pretty jest and one past reason!" and her harsh laughter kept time to the tapping of her cane and her sharp little heels as she moved off in her rustling brocades and tinkling chains.

The last visitor had finally gone. Damaris, wan and weary, lay her head down upon the window-sill. A brazen cloud, passing over, smothered the sky and made the air breathless. Outside in a jujube tree a cicada shrilled harshly. In the world there seemed to Damaris nothing but the discord of its cry, her brain voiced it ever, and her heart beat time to its rasping measures.

"Damaris! Damaris!" came her father's voice from the hall. She felt as though she could not move; then, remembering the episode of the morning, she rose slowly, but before she could step forward her father stood before her, more angry than she had ever seen him.

"What do you mean by this conduct, Damaris? A right agreeable and dignified position have you placed me in! This morning you flout the idea of marriage with Mr. Yonge, while but half hour since I am congratulated upon my son-in-law-to-be, upon the authority of your statement. What am I to think?"

Damaris was silent; speech seemed to her an evil thing, her throat ached, her whole body grew nerveless; she realized swiftly that this evil was the result of her reckless speech overheard and repeated by Mistress Dorothy; for though her Ladyship

would badger her to extremities, she would never betray her.

"Did you make such an assertion?" asked the Governor sharply.

"Yes, father, but I did not mean it."

"Zounds! do you ever mean anything that you say?"

"'Twas but an angry speech made to her Ladyship when she had harried me beyond patience; by ill-fortune it was overheard and mischievously repeated."

"Modest women do not lightly make such assertions. Even now it runs through the town like fire through stubble. The Johnsons keep their word."

"Is it your wish that I should keep mine in this instance to repair my fault? Is it your desire that I should marry Mr. Yonge?"

There was a stricken look in the eyes of the girl, a dangerous tenseness in her voice, a suggestion of tragic amendment that should have alarmed the Governor.

"I desire anything rather than that you should persevere in your present outrageous conduct!" answered the Governor sharply. Anger blinded him to what was unusual in her voice and appearance.

Damaris leaned miserably against the window frame and heard the harsh grating of the cicada. In some seconds a woman lives many years for better or for worse. In a flash she saw herself as her father saw her, and the revelation blinded her with shame. For such the forfeit of her happiness was paltry atonement. She beat down the self-pity that



clung to her aching thoughts, heeded not the claim of a faulty justification that writhed under crowding wrongs, and in a moment her resolve was taken, the sum of the philosophies of others became her own.

"Father," she spoke timidly.

The Governor started; his eyes had lifted to the portrait of her mother, and already his heart was softening toward her. It was an ugly enough muddle into which her folly had brought them, but he would help her through, so help him God! She was beautiful, and one forgives much to beauty. Beauty upsets a man's calculations and sets him at variance with prudence and common sense.

"Father, is there any reason why a woman should not marry Mr. Yonge?"

"By my soul, what do you mean? What is she up to now," he thought perplexedly.

Damaris played with her fingers nervously, her color came and went, a cold hand clutched the words in her throat, but finally sound came forth.

"You are wise, father, and as a man you know the world as a woman cannot know it. Would you then advise a woman to trust herself to him?"

The Governor took several steps across the room; his voice was somewhat disturbed and his eyes looked over her head.

"Do not concern yourself with things beyond your province. Accept your life as other women do. Mr. Yonge is a man of fashion and has probably taken the pleasures that are permitted to such. I know no evil touching him or his life; he is a man of

mettle and integrity, and I truly believe that a woman would suffer no harm in his keeping. Come now, little girl, we will cry a truce to the world and its mischievous devices. We will go to dinner and afterwards it will be a hard case if we devise not some remedy for these complications. I suppose that women will be foolish as long as men are foolish enough to love them and turn their heads with flattery.

## CHAPTER XVI

### A WOMAN'S ATONEMENT

"Dear joy, how I do love thee!  
As the birds do love the spring,  
Or the bees their careful king!  
Then in requite, sweet virgin, love me."

—*H. Constable.*

When Damaris was distressed her horse was her castle. Safe upon Comet's back she felt that she might escape from the world for a while, and after dinner upon that trouble-fraught day she started out eager for the solitude of the blessed forest, faint for its peace. She dreaded to pass through the streets lest she meet acquaintances full of the gossip that Mistress Dorothy had given to the town's wagging tongue, but to remain within at the mercy of callers were worse. She tightened her rein and dashed through the more quiet streets, the trusty sergeant clattering behind, the warm drops trickling from his sunburned face. As yet the streets were almost deserted, the town being scarcely arisen from its siesta. Under a hack-berry a negress drowsed over her basket of fruit, about which yellow-jackets swarmed greedily; an Indian, driving a cart of maize, left his load at the tavern door and the horse nodded and switched at the flies while his master tarried in the sanded room. By the magazine stood

a wagon high-piled with melons; the black driver crushed one over his wheel and divided the jagged red heart with a one-legged tinker who crooned a Cornwall ditty under a vine-covered wall.

To the fervent heat of the sun and to the enervating influence of the stagnant air she was indifferent. She was in that dangerous state of self-immolation wherein women have given their bodies to be burned; a state wherein the coolest head lets slip the wisdom of a lifetime. Her mind and energies were concentrated upon one desperate decision. Shame and wounded pride and baffled love develop strange daring in a woman. The chase of life had resolved itself into one hazardous leap, she meant to shut her eyes and take it blindly. She had lost what made life worth while, what mattered the rest? Some shame there was in her mind because of the gossip which her reckless words had started, but after all, should the rumor come to the ears of Francis Yonge no great harm were done, for gossip was fond of exploiting her affairs and ever gave them some new turn. Francis Yonge was a man of the world—he would laugh at the rumor and turn the laugh upon his interlocutor. And yet her own words burned into her brain and destroyed her usually clear points of vision. Memory of her father's disapproving words sickened her; thoughts that she should no longer think, haunted her; and underlying all, breaking through all her courageous acceptance of circumstance, came the deathless cry of her woman's nature which, like the puling cry of a child, unsolders all the finest philosophies of duty and expediency.

It was one of those periods of tense mood possible to intense women, when the pendulum swings from limit to limit as occasion determines—moods when the destiny of a life hangs upon the chance of the hour. Thinking, she rode; the city soon lay behind her, the forest green about her.

She slackened her rein in a live-oak thicket, bosky and shadowy. Sumachs thrust their crimson fingers through the tangle, and a partridge flew low and hirpling, coaxing away from her brown brood that scattered in the grass.

“To every thicket comes its Dryad!”

Damaris started affrighted. Before her sat Francis Yonge on his horse, smiling and graceful, tossing away his weed with calm insouciance.

“But by my heart, you have been long a coming!”

“Do you come from the plantations?” she asked breathlessly.

“Nay, I blush to confess my whereabouts and occupation to such a model of industry, but will pray to be shriven from my indolence. The day was warm, a couch there was upon a shady porch, a romance there was upon a convenient shelf, a man there was averse to labor, so the three fell together and the hot morning passed.”

Damaris drew a deep sigh of relief. Mr. Yonge regarded her between his narrowed lids. She looked like a white flower in her white habit against the green setting of the forest. There was a new look of intensity in the face that became it, but set him a thinking. “Somebody has been hurting her,” he said to himself. Aloud he said, as their horses

walked on side by side, "I have been waiting for you a weary while."

"How knew you that I would come?"

"A little bird."

"A meddlesome jay, I have no doubt."

"No, a paradise bird."

"Nay, not so; birds of a feather flock together," she fenced lightly.

"Even as you and I," he answered with insinuating tenderness, leaning toward her with entreating eyes.

She colored, sat closer to her saddle, fixed her eyes upon the coming leap, while her heart sickened within her.

"Truly, how came you to know?" she asked in a flickering voice.

"Very simple. My groom takes a note to the Governor; the groom a person of observation, also a person of conversation. 'Mr. Yonge,' says he, 'Mistress Johnson is monstrous fond of riding a-horseback; even these warm afternoons do not affright her.' Whereupon Mr. Yonge became also monstrous fond of riding a-horseback, warm afternoons not affrighting him."

"Will a gallop not affright you?" she asked, in desperate desire for a moment's reprieve, and with a touch she was off like an arrow into the heart of the pine forest to which they had come. Out of a covert rose a doe with a fawn at her side. With the fawn's nose close pressing the flank of its dam the two ran swiftly through the clear stems of the pines to a swamp beyond.

"Egad, what a shot!" Mr. Yonge raised his riding whip and sighted ruefully.

"You would not kill a doe with its young!" cried Damaris reproachfully.

"Not this one, at any rate, soft-hearted lady mine," he sighed, still gazing regretfully through the glooming stems of the pines.

"With a man 'tis ever the instinct of the hunter."

"And with a woman 'tis ever the instinct of flight." He looked significantly at her and she colored beneath his intense eyes. "Will you always flee my love, fair, sweet friend? Methinks we have come to the point where jesting ends. Can no word of mine stay you, no devotion bind you?" He was indeed in sober earnest now; his brow was drawn, his words came slowly.

"Would you like to bind me and I did not love you?" she asked softly. She had come to the leap; it was fate. Would her courage hold out? she wondered.

"Bind you I would, whatever betide. I would give my life to teach you to love me, so help me Heaven!"

"And you did not teach me?" Her eyes were open wide; she saw the leap, the prospect frightened her, yet something was thrusting her forward.

"Right gladly would I hazard my all upon the odds. Come weal or come woe, come love or come indifference, I would have and hold you, in heaven or hell, through time and eternity!" Francis Yonge folded his arms upon his chest and looked at her with a nobler look upon his face than she had ever

seen there before, and something in her own heart smote her.

Damaris rode on in silence for a space, then she drew a deep breath and raised her troubled eyes to him.

"I like you passing well, Mr. Yonge; I find your company agreeable; if you fear not the venture, you may engage to teach me something more." She put whip to her horse with the last word and was away like a flash.

Francis Yonge knitted his brows and looked after her with grave eyes. 'Twas not thus that he had hoped to win her and his vanity received a shock. Indeed, until within the past few weeks he had not been very hopeful of success; he had but followed because he must. Now that she listened to him there seemed something behind. She was a bewildering and incomprehensible creature, but immeasurably dear to him on any terms. There would be no risk with a woman like her, and risk or no risk he would take it and be grateful. He put spurs to his horse and was swiftly beside her; then he lay his hand upon her pommel and forced her into a walk.

"Will you be my wife, Damaris?" he asked eagerly.

"Yes." She avoided his eyes and trembled a little.

"My love will be a thousand tongues to teach you what love is," he pleaded, and his eyes glowed upon her.

"I will open my heart to listen," she answered bravely.



"We will be so happy, sweetheart; my life holds but the thought of you," he urged warmly.

"I trust my loyalty may repay you."

To Mr. Yonge had come a new experience, and one that for the first time in his life stayed the tide of his speech.

They rode on in silence, his hand still upon the pommel of her saddle, her eyes downcast, the color in her cheeks deepening under the ardor of his gaze. He looked upon the girl, elusive as a dream, and repeated to himself that she was his promised wife. Would she ever come to love him? he wondered, while his heart contracted sharply with a new humility. She was so near he could see the rise of her heart-beat under the lappets of her habit, yet the breadth of a world seemed to lie between them. He could not understand the power that lay between them, or why he had not already made his own the sweet lips velvety as rose petals. He was a man well acquainted with feminine frailties in courts and in by-ways, a man to whom love meant the sweets of the eye and the sweets of the touch, to whom women were ripe fruit easily plucked were the hand that coveted but a bold one. The remembrance of the tawdry passions of his life sickened him. This seemed to be the first woman upon whom he had ever looked with reverent eyes, and he wanted more than the bloom of her beauty; he wanted the fire and the dew and the spirit that made up her exquisite personality. He was a man made up of all that was masculine and virile, in whose veins beat a strong red pulse; he wanted a woman, not a flower.

After some time she turned upon him her clear, grave eyes.

"Lives there aught in your past that stands between us?" she asked quietly.

He moved his hand from her pommel and squared himself in his saddle, his horse sprang forward under the spur. He looked straight ahead with frowning eyes, and thought of his past. It might shock her a little, but in it he found no real wrong, because, measured by the standards accepted by society, it was not wanting. He smiled at her possible prudish standards as at a girlish dream, not life; after a little she would grow into the world's grooving, nor lift her eyes to ideals impossible to men in whose veins burned nature's free love, free life. When he had quieted his horse after his ugly moment of introspection he turned to her and answered quietly:

"I was not bred in the school of saints; a nun would weep over some pages of my life. I am no better nor worse than the men of fashion with whom I have consorted; I have taken the pleasures of the town. However, I can say truly that I am a man of honor, and there is nothing in my past that a woman need fear."

"Thank you," she said softly, and held out her hand to him.

The thirsty intoxication of love made him faint for the sweetness of her lips and her breath and the touch of her hair. He leaned toward her, but her look restrained him; he pressed his lips upon the cold little hand with a sense of loss.

Through the sunset land they rode, now in forest, now in open. There lay the rice fields ripe to the

sickle, opening their shimmering gold to the wind; an alligator slipped from his oozy wallow into the black water of the ditch; an army of rice birds rose in a whirring cloud and drifted over to the forest beyond; the lusty maize, with fodder unplucked, gave a thousand tongues to the breeze as it measured its blades and buffeted its tassels.

The fullness of summer rankly ripe, faint with the sensuous orgy of over-bloom, swooned to the cold touch of the delaying frost.

The twilight hovered the drowsy earth under its downy wings; about them, through the forest, gathered the ghostly company of shadows; the spirits of forests long dead lifted up their voices in the soughing night wind; bats lapped heavily in their flight; owls hooted dismally aloft in the tree tops.

The girl seemed a part of the hushed world about her. Not so Mr. Yonge; gay as a troubadour he rode, and right bravely he wooed, though a quiet smile was the warmest rejoinder his devotion won him. When they reached home he lifted her from her horse.

"Courage, sweetheart! I will wait in the piazza until you come. My prayers go with you, my happiness lies in the Governor's hands."

Damaris looked into the drawing-room; it was deserted; she passed on to the library; the lights were turned low; there by a window sat the Governor smoking. She walked over to him swiftly.

"Father," she said, catching her breath, that broke off sharply, "I have promised to be Mr. Yonge's wife; he is waiting without to see you."

"Great God, child, what have you done? What new folly is this?" cried the Governor, springing to his feet.

"The Johnson's keep their word; it is the least that I can do," she answered proudly.

The Governor stood conscience-stricken before her.

"I was angered with you, child; mortified beyond reason at the gossip you fed with your folly. I would rather lose name and fame a thousand times than have you enter a loveless marriage. I will stop it straight before it goes further. What madness to mend folly with folly! Mr. Yonge is a man of honor; I will explain the matter to him and ask him to release you."

"Nay, father, it is for my happiness. I myself have promised freely."

"Do you love him?" asked the Governor sternly. She hesitated and avoided his eyes.

"By my troth, methinks, father, that you are growing sentimental in the twilight. I will turn up the lights," she fenced lightly.

"Do you love him?" the Governor repeated sternly.

"Nay, father, you press me too close; he did not ask me that. Besides, there are so many definitions of love. Be content; he is well so with what I have given him, and Lady Kildare says—"

"Damn Lady Kildare!" cried his Excellency savagely. "I won't have my daughter's life spoiled with her tinkling French philosophy."

"Stay, father"—she laid her hand upon his shoulder—"I must marry some day; why not Mr.

Yonge, since he pleases me well? Truly, I hope to be happy."

"My child, my child, could I but be sure of your heart." The Governor held her close in his arms.

"'Tis a vastly fine match, father."

"Damn all the fine matches in the world. If I only knew, if I only knew how much in earnest you are," he sighed heavily.

"We can't know; we can only hope," she pleaded bravely.

The Governor did not speak; he only pressed her closer to him.

"It will come all right, father; I am going to be very happy. Be kind to Mr. Yonge for my sake; I believe that he loves me truly.

She reached up and kissed him, then slipped from his arms and was gone before he could speak.

## CHAPTER XVII

### ILL TIDINGS

"There is no armor against fate."

—James Shirley.

Just as the sunset gun was fired upon October 3 a tidy coastwise craft ran in upon the first flush of the turning tide, and great news brought she to the town, for to the watchman her master related that hard by the bar, awaiting the tide, the *Henry* and the *Sea Nymph* lay, with their three pirate craft in tow.

Straightway sent the watchman a runner to the Governor and in a time incredibly short the whole town was abroad rejoicing in the good news and hastening hot-foot to the landing.

Between the hours of 9 and 10 the notable fleet came to anchor amid the ringing of bells, the firing of guns and the shouts of the populace.

Colonel Rhett was the first to land; close upon him Captain Maynard, with the pirate's wallet in his breast, his eager eyes seeking through the crowd for one dream face. Around them pressed the people, great and small. There was confusion of questions, wringing of hands, cheers, hat-tossing and mad joy, for truly a great day had come unto the Province;

the Lord had heard the prayers of His people and delivered their enemy into their hands.

Above the surging crowd rose the commanding figure of the Governor. Upon him fastened the eyes of the eager Captain, for surely close to her father would the daughter be found.

"Damaris!" With the thought the crowd faded away, the voice of the people failed, the blue waters of the Cape Fear rolled about him, the dead face of the pirate smiled inscrutably, his hot tears fell upon the bruised blossom while he trembled at the thought of a woman's grief, and turned his reverent eyes from the vision of shame he had brought her.

"Right gladly do we greet you. You have the gratitude of the people. It is a great day," cried his Excellency heartily, wringing his hand warmly.

"Now God be praised that you be come again and that not empty handed!"

"The scurvy scoundrels made it warm for us, your Excellency, but we have brought them to the gallows at last."

"And a right reasonable end for so much villainy."

"So it is, your Excellency; may their bones rot! Is Mistress Damaris abroad to-day?"

"Nay, she pleaded a headache; she tarries at home." The Governor looked over the young man's head with troubled eyes.

"With your Honor's permission I will shortly inquire after her indisposition," the young man replied gladly, for surely now fortune favored him at last, and even while the town gave itself up to noisy demonstration he would have his blessed hour untroubled.

For a moment he saw heaven opened, angels ascending and descending, all bore the face of Damaris—the sight blinded him and breath failed. The happiness in the eager face and the glad tones puzzled the Governor; he would spare this brave heart, he thought compassionately. He moved a step closer and laid his hand on his arm, but at the moment Mistress Dorothy claimed the Captain's attention right prettily.

"To the victor belongs the spoils," she spoke graciously, holding out a bunch of red roses and smiling brilliantly.

"Then by your leave, Mistress Dorothy, I will pass them on to Colonel Rhett, for I am but a small person in this affair," answered the Captain with unflattering alacrity.

"Nay, pardee, there are victors and victors. To you belong these by right of conquest." She smiled tenderly under her silken lashes and courtesied so low that her yellow gown lay like a drift of wind-blown leaves in autumn.

"My fairest thanks, Mistress Dorothy." He bowed low, biting his lips with impatience, and never before had he looked so grand, for the King's scarlet became him well and he looked as proudly out upon the world as one who held it in his keeping. "And now I would pray you excuse me, seeing that important matters await me."

"Nay, you are truly unkind, your haste is unseemly. There are things that I would say to you concerning your interest." Her heart burned to tell him the news of Damaris, but vanity restrained her; she feared what she might see in his face.



"Well?" he queried, twisting his hat impatiently in his hand.

"'Pon my conscience, you make me nervous. Go, but seek me later when your business is despatched and I will tell you many things."

"I shall be pleased to wait upon you. Good-morning. Mistress Dorothy, many thanks." And without waiting further bidding he escaped.

Mistress Dorothy stamped her pretty foot, and with angry eyes watched the tall, strong man make his way masterfully through the crowd.

"So, ho, Knight of the Tomahawk, and Knight of the Black Flag, not so fast with you; the enemy will keep." Lady Kildare leaned out of her coach and tapped him upon the arm with her cane. "Have you buried your manners at sea that you have not a civil word for a friend?"

"For a friend?" asked the Captain quizzically, as he greeted her with a tolerable show of cordiality.

"Well, enemy. To succeed in life one must forget one's friends and love one's enemies."

"It is not always so easy to discriminate."

"No, truly it is not. Even now I am more than half your friend since you no longer stand in the way of my plans. One's plans are one's children, you know, and must be raised at the sacrifice of all else."

"Yes, your Ladyship," he answered absently. His thoughts were under the magnolias and he saw only a pair of eyes like the sky with the moonlight upon it.

"While you have been sailing the seas a-catching pirates, somebody else has caught your sweetheart."

"Your Ladyship has the advantage of me," he answered stiffly.

"Nay, 'tis Mr. Yonge who has the advantage of you, seeing that he is newly betrothed to Mistress Damaris."

"Your Ladyship is pleased to jest, perchance?"

"'Pon my conscience, no; 'tis very pretty earnest, I dare swear."

The hand of the young man closed hard upon the carriage door.

"He is a most fortunate gentleman," he said quietly, yet to himself it seemed that some one else had spoken.

"There was a time when I feared that you pleased the girl's foolish fancy, and 'pon my conscience I was monstrous uneasy."

"Your Ladyship flatters me. Mistress Damaris is a lady of taste."

"So I thought," she replied, looking upon him enigmatically, "but she has proven herself a woman of wisdom. Mr. Yonge is a vastly genteel match."

"Most admirable in every sense, your Ladyship. And now I will bid you good-morning, since urgent matters await me."

"Remember I am your friend."

"'Tis not likely that your Ladyship will allow me to forget. Good-morning." Straight as an arrow he walked away, disappearing around the corner of a warehouse.

"Plucky, plucky, plucky," murmured her Ladyship, following him with admiring eyes. "By the Lord Harry, he is a man. Red blood and blue blood make up a gentleman." Then she fell back among

the cushions with an exclamation of impatience. "'Pon my conscience, though, I would liefer another had told him. I can't rid me of the look in the boy's eyes; honest eyes they are, too. I truly had not thought that it meant so much to him; lately he has seemed but lukewarm in his wooing. This is what comes of interfering with Providence. Bah, what bunglers we are! We weave a coil to catch a fly and when we catch him he isn't the one we want. We follow ambition and love dogs our footsteps. Faugh, what maudlin nonsense am I talking! It smells of cottages and woodbine." She shook her perfume bottle in the air, lifted her head, righted herself in her rustling brocades, then leaned over to greet Mr. Yonge with a sharp epigram.

Meanwhile, prone on his face upon the sands of the shore lay the man who at dawn had held the fullness of the earth in his keeping. If thought came to his stunned brain, he knew it not; he seemed to lie at the bottom of the sea and all of its waves rolled over him.

The gulls dashed their wings in the dipping waves, rose and fell on the pulse of the air, screamed above the prostrate figure, then circled around in ever-widening curves, while the wind, with its gathering tale of ruth, was off with a sigh to the uttermost parts of the earth.

No hand can stay the chartered tragedies of life or take from loss its sting—each suffers as each lives. We choose for our portion the sweet herbs of life, but we partake of the sacrificial feast with the hyssop. Brew we the cup of life never so sweetly, there comes some hand to mix in the wormwood.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### COURAGE

"O, woe is me  
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see."  
*—Hamlet.*

The stirring month of October was drawing to its mellow close. Outside the oranges hung golden, the pomegranates purple-russet upon their stems. A wind, heavy with the clinging mist that gathered upon the ruffled face of the waters, rumbled the tawny fringes of the chrysanthemum and scattered the rose leaves' scented charms.

Lady Kildare entertained a large company at dinner in honor of the victory over the pirates. Both heroes of that occasion were present, though Captain Maynard had been impressed with difficulty by the gibing tongue of the redoubtable hostess. The elaborate meal was ended, wines and tobacco finished, and the company assembled in the fine drawing-room.

Close to the hearth, where blazed a goodly fire of cedar logs, in her high carven chair the hostess sat in state; around her spread the stiff folds of her purple brocade and the daintily slipped foot rested upon its footstool. Opposite sat the Governor and around the others were grouped.

“ ’Pon my conscience, your Honor, since the third of this present eventful October uneasy has lain my head and broken have been my slumbers, because I was affrighted lest a blood-thirsty pirate should be helping himself to my jewels or disfiguring my person with his dagger,” said her Ladyship.

“Nay, your Ladyship, I think that you do but disturb yourself unnecessarily. Though, indeed, we have a crying need for a gaol, I think our prisoners are safely placed. For the gaol, I am hoping to have it in the near future, the late occurrences making it the more imperative, and I have again laid the matter before the Board with all urgency. For the present the prisoners are in the Watch House, about which Captain Nathaniel Partridge, our doughty Provost Marshal, sets a strict guard. Bonnet, with his sailing master, Heriot, and boatswain, Pell, have been removed to the Marshal’s own house, under his direct supervision, so I think your Ladyship may compose her dreams with all serenity.”

“Marry, and I’ll do no such thing until I know that they are six foot underground. The only harmless pirate is one returned to earth, bones and marrow. Harkye, I have no confidence in your make-shift gaols, for all your fine assurances. I’ll wager that some escape you.”

“We do our utmost to prevent it, your Ladyship.”

“Fore the Lord Harry, why don’t you hang them and be done; why fatten them for the crows?”

“That, Madam, is easily explained. Under the old statute of His Majesty Henry VIII., by which we have formerly proceeded, justice drags a slow and

tortuous course; the new Act, to pass which we convened the Assembly, was passed upon October the 18th, and now since all cases are duly and justly provided for, the law will take its course without further delay."

"Law and humbug! Schemes to fatten the lawyers! Hang them off-hand. Aren't you the Governor of this Province and don't you know that they are thieves taken red-handed? And marry, what does it amount to after all, this hanging of a score or two of pirates—it will but anger the hordes of villains who infest our coast and bring them upon us the more hotly."

"That also has been considered, your Ladyship. Only this morning of October 21st have I written to the Commissioners of Trade, laying our necessities before them, recounting our recent victory with the fruits thereof, and requesting them to send a vessel suitable for the protection of the Province.

"Fiddlesticks and ink! Our gracious masters have hearkened so willingly to us in times past that it is right reasonable to suppose that the Commissioners, with whom we have no ado, will comply with our demands. Their Lordships will see that the Board refuses!" she cried irately, spreading out her jewelled fingers to the blaze.

"They needs must see the reasonableness of this demand, and His Majesty's ships are kept for the protection of his people," replied the Governor, sighing heavily.

"A purblind generation, gamesters and profligates, worshippers of gold and their own devices—what care they for reason!"

"Nay, Madam, they are our masters."

"Our oppressors, you should say! Harkye, Governor Johnson, oppressions among people wear themselves out; there comes an end sooner or later."

"They err not knowing, Madam."

"Then is their ignorance the more criminal, seeing that their opportunities are large and we within their power."

"I am hoping speedily to hear from them and that to our advantage."

"Then build you a bridge of rotten sticks, your Excellency; 'twill never carry you over."

"You are ever a prophetess of evil, Lady Kildare."

"Nay, not always; there was I a prophetess of fair fortune." She nodded toward the end of the room, where Mistress Damaris sat in the window seat looking out into the garden, Francis Yonge beside her, exquisite as Beau Nash, consuming her with adoring eyes.

"God grant it prove so!" he answered gravely.

"Now, meseems, you are the prophet of evil," she replied, frowning and tapping her foot till the diamond buckle made pretty lightnings about the velvet hassock.

"God forbid! My child's happiness is the dearest thing to my heart!"

"Truly she has every prospect of happiness. Never a woman with a fairer future."

"It gratifies me to hear you so speak."

"Can you doubt it?"

"How should I tell? It is a serious step and a grave risk. Would it were in a parent's power to insure such things."

"Common sense, not sentiment, insures such things," she replied sharply. "Fortune and position are what common sense demands; for the rest, that silly disturbance called love is but an obstacle to wise matches."

"Nay, your Ladyship, it makes the only wise ones."

"Twaddle, twaddle, your Excellency! Only dairy maids fall in love, even courtezans demand a higher price. Ah, here comes Captain Maynard, hero of a forest of wigwams and a sea of pirates. How goes the world, my gentle brave?"

"Truly above reproach, since your Ladyship has the ruling thereof at this present," he answered as he took the seat designated.

"And beyond regret?" she asked, and her eyes passed over his head to the window beyond.

"Above reproach and beyond regret, your Ladyship," he answered steadily.

"Then stand you where the gods have stood!"

"With the goddesses I am well content," he bowed deferentially.

"Now be you a pretty dissembler at least, and compliments seem the fashion of the sea. But it costs something to be a god." There was a look of admiration in the keen old eyes.

"Pardon, Madam, I do not understand you."



“’Pon my conscience, I do not mean that you should, I am a woman. I have done you a kindness to-day—Mistress Dorothy was not bidden to my feast.”

“Again, Madam, I do not understand.”

“Again you are a pretty dissembler.”

“I am of but a sorry wit and cannot follow your Ladyship.”

“I am of but a delicate wit and cannot enlighten your Lordship,” she mimicked mockingly.

“To your Ladyship all things are possible.”

“Gramercy! think you so? She looked beyond to the couple in the window. “What think you of our newly betrothed—think you not that they are a right pretty pair and vastly well matched?” Her shrewd, brilliant eyes were fixed upon him.

He turned around that he might regard them fairly, then looking full into the eyes of his inquisitor he answered pleasantly:

“Yea, your Ladyship, they are vastly well-matched and do credit to your discrimination. All happiness attend them.”

The old lady measured him fully. There was a look of pity, of regret almost, in the hard, clever face as she spoke:

“I believe you were made for a soldier. Cæsar could not have done better.” To herself she said: “Heigho, what a wicked, meddlesome schemer I am. We can’t pay our debts with other people’s blood. I do not feel as victorious as I should.”

“There, pick up my stick.” As he handed it to her she laid her cold fingers upon his strong brown

ones. "I would rather be your friend than your enemy, boy, but circumstance rides me at its own gait and sometimes 'tis the pace that kills others. Ah, Colonel Rhett; here comes another hero. I feel almost as though I were at the siege of Troy. 'Tis indeed a field-day for heroes."

"And Attic salt," said the tall, handsome officer, bowing and taking the seat vacated by Maynard.

Then launched her Ladyship and the gallant officer straightway into brilliant conversation, but over and over the stifled voice of her mind was murmuring: "Why did I jilt the grandsire of Francis Yonge? Are we never rid of the past or quit of its debts?"

Captain Maynard, meanwhile, had passed into the hall and thence into the garden. To set one's face to take up a life that has lost hope requires the hardest powers of the soul, and between heats the staunchest heart fails sometimes.

In the window Damaris still sat. She saw the familiar figure disappear under the magnolias, and her eyes rested dully upon the umbrageous shades that had swallowed him out of her sight.

"Nay, mistress, find you in that dull garden things more to your liking than my adoring eyes?" spoke Francis Yonge reproachfully. Damaris started guiltily, then seeing that the garden was hidden from him, turned her back upon it and lifted her eyes to him. "So, sweetheart, 'tis better so. I am jealous of even the flowers that your sweet eyes rest upon.

"Weary you never of making pretty speeches?"

"Nay, gave I hundred lifetimes to it, the prettiness of all my speeches could but touch the hem of your prettiness."

"Troth, you have ever a readiness therein. Me-thinks 'tis practice makes you perfect."

"'Tis the fullness of my heart that overflows to you-ward."

"So often has it overflowed that but a touch tips it over."

"Nay, but you are cruel, fair love!"

"Not cruel, but well informed."

"What do you mean?" he asked sharply, leaning toward her.

"What do I mean?" she asked, and laughed a little. "What do I ever mean? Have you ever found out?"

"By my sweet life, I have not!"

"Then, prithee, do not try; 'tis not worth your pains, I do assure you."

"Whatever concerns you is vastly worth while."

"Do not let it be so. The less I concern you the happier you will be." She was looking out into the garden again and spoke absently.

"There you are wrong. For me there is no happiness where you are not."

"Are you quite sure there will be happiness with me?" she asked gently, and there was pain in her eyes.

"Whatever there were with you, 'twere hell without you!" he answered passionately.

She drew back and trembled a little under his intense eyes.

"It were better and you did not care too greatly for me. Just love me enough to be loyal. That is all the love I can give, and I would not be too much beholden!" she spoke pitifully.

"To measure my love or to stay it were not in my power. You must love me some day, seeing that my love is so great, and love begets love. Say 'tis true, sweetheart!"

"Nay, words are idle," she said, trying to speak lightly, for the strain of the situation was becoming unendurable to her. "I must go to Lady Kildare—I have neglected my hostess shockingly!" And in a moment, before he could interfere, she had harbored herself safely with her Ladyship.

Francis Yonge stood looking after her with ill-concealed vexation and with somewhat of righteous indignation in his heart. The plumes of his vanity were more than a little bedraggled in the dust of her indifference; his creed, man's inalienable right to rule the woman, was sorely shaken by the girl; also he was enjoying the disappointments of success. He set his teeth together and smiled bitterly. "'Tis not yet the end. 'Tis a hard matter, but I can win her. Damn that contradiction of reason, a woman's will! I have heard of men being in love, but the chiefest of such fools am I! Heigho, I will talk to the Governor; he quiets a man's humor."

Meanwhile Lady Kildare was saying to Damaris:

"Just in time, child, to do me a service. Prithee, seek my scent-bottle somewhere; likely 'tis on my dressing-table. The air of this room is too fresh

and crude, October roses give no fragrance. The air *au naturel* suits not cultivated taste."

Having found the missing trifle, Damaris had reached the foot of the stair, when through the doorway, almost opposite, Captain Maynard stepped in from the garden. Face to face they stood, each startled, each silent, each with a white face. Damaris was the first to regain composure—women live upon their nerves and rise more easily to the occasion.

"This is the first opportunity I have had to congratulate you upon your successful expedition," she spoke a little breathlessly.

"Also the first that I have had to congratulate you upon your betrothal. I wish you great happiness."

"Thank you," she answered frankly, looking fair into his eyes. "It is pleasant to have friends approve one's happiness. Were the pirates very fierce?"

"Some of them," he answered. He was thinking of the one who had kept faith with her, and what that faith had cost himself. He could not understand her conduct, her woman's reasoning was beyond his kenning; yet there came some faint glimmerings thereof upon which he manfully shut his eyes, but which made him very gentle with her, and this new softness in eyes that had grown hard toward her puzzled Damaris. And so the two stood, a wall between them, upon either hand a familiar country holding a barred and impenetrable fortress. The mystery of life wrapped them about and each

seemed strange to the other. The remembrance of their past that flashed upon them was as the familiar tune of a long-forgotten song ending in a sob.

"It must be fine to sail the sea," she spoke after a little.

"Not so fine as to be in the heart of the forest. Upon the seas one seems too much oneself; in the forest one seems a part of it all, one's personality fades away."

"That must be beautiful; would I were there!" she said, with wistful eyes. "To lose one's personality would be to lose one's troubles."

"Even so. To be lapped away from the complications that make up our lives, into the nascent rest of uncorrupted nature," he answered, speaking rapidly. He was looking straight into the grey eyes that he had seen so often through the boughs when he lay wrapped in his blanket in the forest primal. She started from him guiltily and lowered her eyes. When she spoke again her voice had grown lightly indifferent.

"After all, it were better to dwell in houses than in tents. Doubtless we would weary soon enough of being re-absorbed in nature, the ego is not easily quenched. For my part I should pine for my own wilful way. Pardon me, Lady Kildare languishes for her essences. What do you think that she would say to being re-absorbed into nature?"

"Life has so changed her constitution that not a natural atom could be found therein, unless it be the venom of serpents!" he replied bitterly.

"Nay, you judge her harshly; she is better than she seems. She has lived so long in a world where hearts were never trumps that she forgets hers until necessity forces her to remember it."

"'Tis long since she has remembered!"

"You do her wrong; she is a true-hearted friend," she urged zealously.

"And a very open-handed enemy."

"She but assumes enmity to try your mettle. You men will not understand."

"Women, never!" he answered emphatically, looking searchingly at her. "Do you think that the Cherubim and Seraphim, with their peculiar advantages, do?"

"You men were not meant to understand; such knowledge were too great for you," she answered with her little mocking laugh, and in a moment she had passed from him. Only the fragrance of the roses in her dress remained with him, also a knowledge of her as intangible as the perfume of flowers.

Damaris had felt so much more at ease with him because her engagement had removed her from the questionable position that she had occupied in her own eyes. Self-respect being re-established, danger of being misunderstood having passed, the pain she had suffered and which had seemed to have become a part of herself was a more endurable thing, separated as it was from mortification. Grief is a dignified thing and may be buried decently out of sight; mortification is an evil thing and cannot be laid—even with fasting and with prayer goes it not forth.

Martin Maynard' stood looking after her, steadying himself against the balustrade. He was spent with the strain of the great temptation, and under the bronze the brave face was white. Surely never stood a man more hardly pressed. He must treat her as the promised wife of another, while the love in his own heart, justified by the pirate's story, the concern for her past, the desire to remove all misunderstanding from her mind and obloquy from his name, cried out strongly within him.



## CHAPTER XIX

### STRENUOUS DAYS

"Who hath his life from rumors freed,  
Whose conscience is his strong retreat,  
Whose state can neither flatterers feed  
Nor ruin make accusers great."

—*Sir H. Wotton.*

For all the sanguine assurances of his Excellency to her Ladyship, his heart was heavy with forebodings of evil. He felt that the victory over the pirates was more presageful of future complications than fruitful of present relief, since what had been accomplished against them was but sufficient to incite them to renewed depredation with the added incentive of revenge. The robbers of the sea were the more strongly banded in unholy alliance against the defenseless Colony, while England held the hand that might have stayed their marauding.

There was bitterness in the heart of the Governor. The rectitude of his own nature made him peculiarly sensitive to injustice in others, and his sense of loyalty to the Board struggled with the hurt he felt in behalf of the neglected Colony.

Across seas England made her own quarrels, defended her own interests, unmindful of the struggling Colony that she involved in her brawls. Carolina paid a heavy penalty for belonging to

England. French privateers preyed upon her commerce; Spanish galleons dropped down upon her stores; Spaniards, whose hearts were ever hot against England for assuming their supremacy upon the seas, and between whom and themselves was ever cause of rancor, open or secret, who deemed all injuries done to heretics pleasing in the sight of a Romish God, who resented the intrusion of the English in lands claimed by themselves, incited the Indians from St. Augustine to horrible massacres—the frontiers of the Colony lived in constant danger of tomahawk and fire.

Just now the outlook for the Colony that held such possibilities within itself was particularly gloomy. Its riches were necessarily agricultural, demanding export, its necessities supplied with imports of English manufacture, consequently as long as the sea was infested with keen robbers and desperate free-booters, more or less legalized, there was small hope of the Colony's increasing welfare. And at this trying juncture, even as the Governor had apprehended, almost immediately came the disconcerting information that Moody, a notorious pirate, was off the bar, right stoutly equipped with a staunch ship, fifty guns and two hundred men well bred in piracy. He had already taken two ships bound from England to Carolina and lay there in wait for other booty.

The court to convict Bonnet and his companions had not yet been convened by the slow and cumbersome methods of justice allowed by England, though the Act passed in the Assembly had been designed to hasten it. To keep, without a gaol, so many crim-

inals was a burdensome matter, and one that taxed the community to its utmost.

When the alarming intelligence came to the Governor he arose in his wrath and made a mighty resolve, and in such men the carrying power of decision fails not of its goal. Straightway he convened his Council, who were resolute men, fitted for the stress of circumstance, but needing his masterful will and direction.

The worthy Councilors, in all their bravery of lace and French cloth, were promptly in their places, their faces betokening their grave realization of their position. The Governor rose and greeted them—never before had they seen him so white and resolute. He laid the situation before them in strenuous terms, his voice strong with purpose and feeling.

“Gentlemen, fellow-Councilors, the time for a decision is upon us. The bonds are tightening about us, the outlook is disastrous, the peace and prosperity of the Colony are at stake. We have none but ourselves to look to in this evil hour. We must save ourselves. To our letter of appeal, addressed to the most honorable Lords Proprietors, despatched upon June the 18th of this present year of grace, no reply has come. Deaf as an adder are they to our requests, blind to their own interests. Our treasury, as we know to our sorrow, has been emptied by frequent and expensive wars with the Indians who harry our borders. The last expedition, successfully accomplished against the pirates, has aggravated our impoverished condition. Where the funds for this present expedition are to come

from, who can tell? But certain it is that it must be sent out and that speedily; having once put our hand to the plow we cannot turn back. What we have begun we must finish lest a greater misfortune befall. The pirates must be exterminated at all costs, else there be no future prosperity or present safety. We must make ourselves to be feared of them—it is our only salvation. We must carve our resistance upon their ships and blazon it with their blood. Gentlemen, will you pledge yourselves personally to bear this expense, though the most sanguine among you see no speedy hope of reimbursement? I myself give freely one thousand pounds to start this fund. As faithful fellow-citizens I appeal to you to-day. Shall we not stand shoulder to shoulder and accomplish this great and necessary undertaking? We play for heavy stakes—for this the country of our adoption that we have hewn out of the wilderness, for the homes that we have builded, for our women, for our sons, for all that makes life lief and dear to us! We must pay of our blood and our gold would we accomplish this thing. Gentlemen, are we of one mind in this Council Chamber? Shall free-born Englishmen submit to the tyranny of despicable robbers? To the sea and to victory!”

With the last stirring words the Governor waved his naked sword aloft. Straightway a dozen swords flashed from their scabbards and clove keenly the air. “To the sea and to victory!” they answered to a man, and a hoarse shout went up that set the armor on the wall a-rattle with its vibrant fervor.

When the excitement of their enthusiasm had in somewhat subsided, they fell upon the consideration of ways and means to carry out their purpose. In default of armed cruisers from England they turned their eyes to a score of sailing vessels that lay at anchor awaiting some turn of fortune that would justify them in setting sail.

Upon being approached in the matter the captains of said vessels claimed to have no authority from owners in England to risk their property in hazardous enterprise. The Governor kept his own council, but with the assistance of one well skilled in ship-craft examined the vessels. After a careful inspection the *Mediterranean*, Arthur Loan, master; the *King William*, John Watkinson, master; the *Sea Nymph*, Fayrer Hall, master, were impressed for the public service, and Bonnet's famous old *Royal James*, now held as a prize, was also made serviceable under the command of John Masters, formerly master of Rhett's flagship in the Cape Fear expedition. In all they carried sixty-eight guns, and the Colony was most sanguine of success.

Now arose a new and unforeseen difficulty. Colonel Rhett was esteemed the best man for the command of the expedition, seeing that he had proven himself so capable and successful in the last, acquiring for himself well-deserved fame thereby. It had happened, however, that through some difference of opinion between the Governor and himself, relative to the recent expedition, that he had quarreled with his Excellency, for with great gallantry and commendable qualities he was also afflicted with

a fiery and uncertain temper, little capable of brooking opposition even from those in authority.

The Governor, a large-minded man, heart and soul absorbed in his work, regardless of personal differences, advised the selection of Colonel Rhett as commander. He was forthwith summoned to be present at the special meeting of the Council. Other business in furtherance of the expedition having been despatched, the Governor rose.

“Colonel Rhett, since you have richly deserved the honor and gratitude of our people, we have summoned you to-day to offer you another opportunity in which to distinguish yourself in the service of your country. I am empowered by these gentlemen present, who appreciate your talents, as well as by the unanimous inclination of the people, to tender to you the command of the serious expedition which we are about to undertake against our ancient foes the pirates, to whom we bear no gentle will. With the deepest confidence in your ability, highest regard for your judgment, and warmest admiration for your courage, and wishing you God-speed and a right noble success, we, the assembled here, do empower you to take charge of the fleet with full powers for its conduct and maintenance.”

In the rear of the room, behind the worthy Councilors, Colonel Rhett arose. He shook back the long, glossy curls of his full-bottomed wig, tossed his scarlet cloak over his shoulder and strode to the upper end of the chamber with an air of haughty unwillingness, ill-becoming the honor just paid him. To the Governor bowed he first with measured re-

spect, then to the Councilors with easy grace, but a frown knitted his handsome brow and a smile, not altogether good to look upon, curled the corners of his haughty mouth. When he spoke his voice was somewhat indifferent, though of sufficient courtesy.

"To your Excellency Governor Johnson, and to the worthy members of Council here assembled, I offer my warmest thanks for the honor done me. I am deeply sensible of your consideration, but with due regard for your Excellency and your worthy confrères, I must beg to decline this honor."

That Colonel Rhett would refuse the command had never occurred to the mind of one present; his words fell like a thunder-clap among them.

"I presume you have sufficient reasons for this decision, Colonel Rhett, and that your action is well considered," asked the Governor, restraining but hardly his anger. That a man would carry a private resentment into a matter of public moment was inconceivable to him.

"My reasons are sufficient and well considered, your Excellency."

"Are they unalterable?"

"Absolutely unalterable."

"Do you well consider the serious loss your decision means to the expedition which concerns so nearly our welfare?"

"You flatter me, your Excellency. There are many of equal ability."

"Your experience has fitted you peculiarly for this undertaking."

"Occasion develops the man, your Excellency."

"And a man should rise to the occasion."

"And it pleased him," replied the Colonel laconically.

"A man should be guided by duty, not impulse."

"Nay, there I disagree with your Excellency. Many men, many minds. And furthermore I would reserve the privilege of choosing my own duty."

The Governor sat in troubled silence. A whisper of disapproval ran round the room. Colonel Rhett, upon whom they had most confidently relied, failing them, they knew not where to turn. The one man whom the Governor thought most fitting for the position was Captain Maynard, and to him the Council might object upon the score of his youth. Furthermore, he shrank from naming him. He loved Maynard, he remembered his recklessness and his great distaste for life, brought about by Damaris's trifling; he felt that the young man had been sufficiently injured by his family; he should not be placed in the fore of the fight, and he could prevent it. Prevent it he would with the only alternative.

Meanwhile, Colonel Rhett stood with crossed arms, in indifferent unconcern of the resentful looks fixed upon him and of the murmur of discontent around him.

"Your Excellency, with your permission I would ask Colonel Rhett to state some of the unalterable reasons that deter him from serving his country in the hour of need," asked Francis Yonge with fine scorn.



"My reasons are my own, and I allow no man to question them!" replied Colonel Rhett haughtily.

"So it seems, as is also your patriotism," answered Francis Yonge, with a sneer.

"I will be pleased to justify my patriotism to any man who dares question it!" replied Colonel Rhett angrily, with hand on his sword. A dozen hands sought sword, a dozen pairs of wrathful eyes levelled upon the capricious Colonel.

"Peace, gentlemen!" spoke the Governor, rising and stretching out his hand with commanding dignity. "Let there be no dissensions among us; the public need calls for our best, it is no time for private bickering. Colonel Rhett stands within his right to refuse the office without slur upon his patriotism; his past precludes the possibility of such and his future will disclaim it. To him I will but say, in all courtesy, that I hope that he is acting wisely and from motives worthy of his character and reputation, and I would ask him again if his position is final?" He looked searchingly at the Colonel, and the two measured each other in potent silence. Then the reckless brown eyes fell before the keen glance of the clear grey ones, but there was no sign of weakening in the handsome patrician face.

There was a muttering of discontent among the disgruntled Councilors, but no open break. Francis Yonge took snuff violently, showering it liberally upon his flowered waistcoat; Jonathan Skrine folded his short, fat arms a little lower than his breast, while Benj. de La Conseillere polished the hilt of

his sword with the cuff of his gauntlet. Finally Colonel Rhett spoke in cool, incisive tones:

"I thank your Excellency for your courtesy, since, as the matter now stands, it lies between us two. With those others, and it please me, I might reckon differently." He waved his hand scornfully toward the indignant Council. "And I beg to repeat to your Excellency that my decision is final."

"I accept your decision, Colonel Rhett," answered the Governor with dignity. "You may retire to your seat. Now, gentlemen," he asked, turning gravely to his confreres, "is there one among you who could relieve this present vexed situation by suggesting a leader for our expedition?"

There was a troubled shaking of heads, but no reply.

"Then, gentlemen, as the matter now stands, and with your fair agreement, though my offer fail somewhat in modesty, I will undertake the command of this expedition."

"Not so, your Excellency; you are too generous. It is no work for you!" cried Francis Yonge.

"Your hands are over-full at home!" cried one.

"Heaven be praised for such a Governor!" spoke another.

"You are a worthy son of our great Sir Nathaniel!"

"Your Excellency cannot be spared from this difficult administration!" cried another, and so the eager, admiring protest ran on from mouth to mouth, full-voiced and hearty.

Meanwhile, the Governor stood a silent and immovable figure in his grey suit with its silver facings, his resolute face strongly silhouetted against the saffron light of the October sunset that mellowed itself in the mullioned panes behind him. The purpose never faded from the determined eyes, but a smile unbent his lips somewhat as he caught the disconcerted glance of Colonel Rhett, in whose soul, for all his reckless pride, it rankled that the Governor should prove him a smaller man.

When the storm of protest and enthusiastic admiration had passed, Governor Johnson spoke quietly and pertinently :

“Gentlemen, I dare affirm that you will come to see the wisdom of my suggestion. Some small experience have I enjoyed that may be serviceable to us. Every expression of your confidence but strengthens my resolution. I pledge myself right strenuously to carry out the purposes we have planned together, and may God grant us a speedy and successful finish, seeing that we enjoy peace neither at home nor abroad for these mischievous villains. And now, and it please you, we will adjourn this present meeting until further necessity require.”

The Governor took up his hat and walked quietly from the room. The men bowed their heads as he passed. When he crossed the threshold they sent up a cheer, which was speedily taken up by those in the street, who quickly came to know what had occurred, while the Governor tarried some moments in his private office.

As he drove quickly through the streets the eager crowd ran after the lumbering coach with its goodly quarterings, brought by Sir Nathaniel from England, and cheer followed cheer as the Governor, with bared head, bowed and smiled quite grandly, while his heart ached for his daughter to whom he carried such grievous tidings.

## CHAPTER XX

### STRESS

"O never say that I was false of heart,  
Though absence seemed my flame to qualify.  
As easy might I from myself depart  
As from my soul, which is thy heart."

—*Hamlet.*

"Assure you my good liege,  
I hold my duty as I hold my soul."

—*Hamlet.*

For the past six months Damaris had been coming to the conclusion that it was woman who was born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward. Had she been given to tears the lustrous light might long since have been quenched in the clear grey eyes. Had she been given to confidences she would have poured her dolorous story into the ears of her gossip until the day-star arose. As it was, her physical constitution was against tears, as was also her mental. As for gossip, she had none; friendly with many, she was intimate with none. Her father had been her chief friend, his companions her associates, until her blooming womanhood had attracted to herself its coterie of gallants. The Governor had ever discouraged special intimacies with girl companions; such he considered the hot-bed of sentimentality. Lady Kildare he tolerated because he deemed the girl's wholesome sweetness could not be hurt by the

older woman's clever cynicism, and in somewhat she would serve as an antidote to the superabundant emotions of youth. Instead of seeking the alleviations to be found in the sympathetic understanding of another, her troubles grew big in her own heart, until the gradual adjustment of time fitted them to her endurance.

When her father told her that he would speedily take the command of the expedition she seemed crushed, and during the time that elapsed before the sailing went about as in a troubled dream, with the look of a sleep-walker in her eyes.

During the stirring days that intervened, Captain Maynard, who had been an enthusiastic volunteer, came frequently to the Governor's house on business connected with the expedition. Damaris clung to her father, haunted his study and was allowed to busy herself with various matters, and thus it chanced that she and Captain Maynard were constantly together, Mr. Yonge being detained elsewhere upon business.

Unconsciously they fell back somewhat upon the old footing; the trouble, together with the mutual interests of the past few days, seemed to have blotted out the intervening episodes.

The expedition was delayed several days on account of claims made by masters of impressed vessels, which claims the Governor adjudged to be reasonable, whereupon an extra session of the Assembly was convened wherein they voted for a measure to secure ship-owners against all losses.

Upon the 25th of October, while the town was busied within over its preparations and busied without in patrolling the coast, Bonnet and Heriot managed to escape, through the assistance of secret friends. This created a vast tumult and disturbance throughout the Province. Even the Governor and his officials were censured for negligence—connivance, some mischievous persons dared suggest. Whereupon the Governor promptly and wrathfully offered a reward of £700 for Bonnet, sending out speedily trusty parties to scour the coast and its inlets.

Colonel Rhett, somewhat regretful for past conduct perhaps, readily undertook to find Bonnet, and was entrusted with the largest party.

Meanwhile, the court met upon October 28th, Nicholas Trott, Judge of Vice Admiralty and Chief Justice of the Province, presiding over the trial of Bonnet's crew.

It was the third of November, the afternoon before the final sailing of the fleet. Everything was in readiness, the assuming of the command by his Excellency having inspired the people with great confidence and enthusiasm, so that the full quota of volunteers was speedily obtained and all preparations completed with hearty co-operation.

Damaris and Captain Maynard had been busily copying some plans and charts under the Governor's supervision. Mr. Yonge had looked in several times and essayed conversation, but finding the copyists much engrossed, had laughed good-naturedly and taken leave.

The last sheet was finished and tied up. Damaris had dropped the wax upon an official document for England and Captain Maynard had carefully affixed the Governor's seal thereto. She still held in her hand the smoking wax, while the heavy drops fell unheeded upon a litter of papers.

Captain Maynard, looking up from sorting his documents, saw the heedless action, and looked from it to the tired, white face. He tied his portfolio into a hard knot and rose.

"Come into the garden, won't you? It has been a hard day and it is warm within."

"Yes," she answered wearily, pushing her hair back from her face, "it is very warm, so unlike November; it is really sultry."

"I think that it is going to storm," he answered, looking seawards, while Damaris repaired the mischief she had wrought.

"Are you coming with me?"

"Yes, 'tis stifling here," she answered listlessly, and they passed into the garden.

It was long since they had stood there together under the magnolias. The promise of spring and the fullness of summer had gone, in their place a regretful November. Perhaps thoughts came to each, but we seldom speak our thoughts when they come from the heart; in most human intercourse imitation thought passes as current coin. Listlessly they spoke of things indifferent, of anything rather than of to-morrow's farewells.

A storm was coming; the air lay as in a stifled trance about them; above them gloomed the pallid



skies, death-marked with purpling blotches that gathered into the livid blackness of storm drifts. There lay a greenish pallor upon the face of the waters; in leafage and herbage there was the thrilled hush of life; the lightning that shivered and flickered through the ragged clouds held the wan, blue light of corpse-fires; everywhere the tenseness of Nature's stress tightened about them.

The girl watched the sharp-angled flashes riving the clouds, the man watched the unconscious face that showed so white in the breathless air. Perhaps for the last time he looked upon that face, and an almost overmastering impulse rose within him to cleanse his name from the blackness with which it was smirched in her sight. She was betrothed to another. Surely the message sent by the pirate could mean nothing to her now. It had not been love, but remorseful regret that had prompted the sending thereof. To be re-established in her eyes meant much to him; the more should he lose life in this present adventure. Not to be loved by a woman is often a man's portion; he must bear it as he does other reverses in life against which there is no appeal; but to be despised, and that unjustly; to be silent when self-love urges him to speak, but honor silences him, that is more than a man's portion, it savors of the strength of archangels.

"You won't let father run into danger, will you?" she asked suddenly.

"Oh, certainly not; the Governor is easily controlled and fighting pirates is an innocent pastime!" he answered ironically. The world had hit him

full in the face; smarting under the succession of blows and blinded by pain, he felt that he must hurt something, and struck out wildly.

"I do not mean that," she replied, flushing. "You are cruel to me; you have always been so!"

"I am a brute, a brute! I apologize humbly. It must be the electricity in the air that unbalances me. But in the past I might suggest that the cruelty has been upon the other side."

"I have never hurt you willingly in my life!"

"Then are you past-mistress in unconscious warfare?"

"The worst hurt that I ever received was one that no gentleman would have given!" she spoke recklessly and her eyes were hard and defiant. Perhaps it was the electricity that had disturbed her equilibrium too.

"So it was a woman! They are as heaven and hell, the best or the worst."

"Not so; no woman, but a man, and one who had professed to love me!" She was looking straight at him now, and there was no mistaking the meaning in her blazing eyes.

"Great God, Damaris!" he groaned, and buried his face in his arms upon the back of the bench.

She stood before him quivering with excitement, her eyes burning, the blue flashes of the lightning playing about her, the moan of the pent force in the thunderous clouds the only sound in that world of stress. Society and its conventions had fallen from her, she had returned to the integrity of elemental

conditions, loosed from all the artificialities of life by the sinister spell of the storm.

"What can you say for yourself?" she demanded passionately.

"I—nothing!" he answered hoarsely as he lifted his haggard eyes to her face, full of an appeal that she scorned.

"So thought I! Cowards are ever silenced when confronted with their deeds!"

He sprang to his feet, stung by the taunt. He held out his arms as though to ward off a blow.

"Don't, Damaris; don't!" he groaned. "You do not know!"

"Had you ever loved me even for one brief day you could not have done it!" she cried bitterly.

He stood with bowed head in silence before her.

"And now you are going off, to your death perhaps, and I would like to forgive you. I could never be happy if I do not. No matter what might come to me, I would always be haunted by your face, would see it always, rising and falling upon a dreadful sea, all running with blood!" She ended with a stifled sob and wringing her hands.

Her strange excitement and her miserable eyes frightened him. He stood, with clenched hands, collecting himself for a mighty effort. Was the Devil tempting him? Was it a ruse to unman his honor? Must he do for her what he would not do for himself?

"Would it really make you happier could you forgive me, Damaris?" he spoke at last.

"I could never be happy and I did not. But I cannot forgive you, cannot, cannot! I will always see your face rising and falling, rising and falling on waves all of blood!"

"Women have forgiven men worse sins than this, Damaris. Could you not find it in your heart to forgive me? Think of the parting to-morrow; we go forth upon the threshold of eternity, as it were. Could you not think of me as of one done with life and forgive me? Forgive me not because I deserve it of you, but because you are a woman, and women's lives are made up of forgiving men. Because we were such good friends long ago!" he pleaded desperately.

"Such disloyalty I could never forgive! The remembrance of it will taint my whole life with its poison!" she cried wildly. "And yet your dead face will reproach me always. There is no help for me. Until eternity the sight of your face rising and falling on the waves, your face blood-stained and wind-tossed will be my curse, for there is no rest for the unforgiven nor unforgiving."

He laid his hand upon her shoulder and forced her down upon the bench.

"Sit down," he whispered. There was something so unnatural in her passion that it awed him. "Rest while I talk. You are so tired and I would tell you something not soon ended."

She fell back in docile quiet, spent physically and mentally by her outburst, and he began calmly to say for her sake what he had rather died than have said for his own, howsoever great the temptation.

“You remember when I went with Colonel Rhett to Cape Fear River, 'tis not so long since. When we came upon the pirates lying there and forced them to surrender I was put in charge of one of the prizes. While getting her into shape for sailing, a pirate whom I thought dead heard my name called and beckoned me to him. When I bent over him and would have eased him somewhat, seeing that he was nigh to God's judgment, he told me that he had been one of the party sent up to the town by Black Beard and that he had promised you to bring to me a message of forgiveness. This message he had been prevented from giving, seeing that he returned drunken to his vessel, was tumbled into the hold, and when he came again to his senses our vessel had been released, captives freed and sailed away. Dying, he roused himself when he heard my name, and with the last spark of flickering vitality begged me to tell you that he had been true to his word. When I returned home you were betrothed to Mr. Yonge. Can you forgive me now and be happy?”

“Why did you not tell me when you came again!” she cried quickly, springing to her feet and standing before him with transfigured face.

“It was too late!” he answered brokenly. “You were bound to another.”

“True; I seemed to have forgotten,” she answered faintly.

“Is it too late after all, Damaris?” he asked hoarsely. What he had seen in the girl's face had

undone him. "If you can forget, you cannot really care for that other," he pleaded passionately.

She lifted her head and drew a deep breath and looked steadily into the pleading eyes.

"You forget that I have given my word."

"If you have not given your heart with your word, it were better to break it!" he urged desperately.

"I would rather break my heart than my word!" she answered, almost with a sob.

"Poor, brave little soul. God pity us both!"

"So be it," she whispered; "and keep you safe unto the end!"

"Grant it be a speedy one!" he added devoutly.

She gave a cry of pain, reached out her arms and started toward him, but there came instantaneously a crash so tremendous that it seemed to shiver the earth about them. Nature, defying law, was loosed upon the world. She sprang away from him, and a long flash of lightning gleamed like a fiery sword between them.

"The storm is upon us!" She spoke with sudden calm, but moved not.

With a quick realization of danger he seized her hand and dragged her away from the spot to which she seemed rooted. Above them the branches writhed and lapped in sudden fierce gusts, the last leaves of summer whirled about them, the first great rain drops hissed like bullets as they flattened themselves against the hot earth. . . .

When the two flying figures were well out of sight, Mr. Yonge stepped out from the shrubbery.

He had been an eavesdropper, and like most eavesdroppers had heard nothing to his advantage.

He had not been a premeditated listener. When he had been ignored by the engrossed workers he had betaken himself to the garden, thinking that Damaris might come out later, as was her wont. Damaris had hung a hammock there against a huge hedge of Cherokee roses, whose sturdy arms reached high into the branches above, forming a complete covert. There he had stretched himself to shorten the time of waiting by busying himself with idleness.

On a neighboring bough a mocking-bird was regaling himself with the ruby, vinous seeds of a pomegranate and singing short grace notes between his cups. Mr. Yonge lay there wondering how many stones he would have to throw to hit him, and before he had quite made the requisite number of imaginary trials he was lost to the world and its ennui.

When he waked, or rather when the two familiar voices first reached him, he was not fully awake, and straightway they wore themselves into the grotesqueness of a dream.

A ship was sailing the Southern seas, she crossed the line of the equator. A torrid world was about her, sky and sea and air seemed molten fire. He, Francis Yonge, a sea-god, was the fantastic wooden figurehead of the ship, and the heat of the sun shrivelled his eyes and peeled the paint from his vermilion cheeks. Close to the prow, where he was fast nailed with spikes of fire, stood Damaris and Maynard; he heard all they said, and it seemed

strange that he, a wooden sea-god, should listen. Then suddenly, with wide-open eyes and quivering limbs, he lay full awake in the hammock, and instead of being nailed upon the prow of a ship he was nailed upon a rack of torture.

What should he do? Having heard so much 'twere better to hear to the end and not discover himself. To let them know that he had heard would but have aggravated matters. Now he stood, burning with anger and shame and pain. Despite himself something of admiration mingled with his wrath against Maynard. With his anger against Damaris, a sudden and increased respect and love.

"By heaven, this is a pretty affair! A most damnable complication! The foul fiend fly away with him!" he raged.

He stood digging his heels into the earth, then he drew out his box and took a pinch of snuff regardless of the storm that howled about him. The rain that had begun by spotting his fawn-colored vest into the semblance of a leopard skin, turned it into one tawny coat. His ruffles hung limp and forlorn; he picked up his hat with its dragged plumes and set it jauntily upon his dripping locks.

"'Tis the hazard of love, he lost and I won. By the Lord Harry, I will hold what I have won, so help me heaven or hell!" he cried grimly. "I really believe that it is going to rain," he added with a smile, and strolled leisurely toward the gate. "There would have been no use for the Devil had women not first been turned loose upon the earth. Damme,



what do I care for a woman's vagaries; she has promised to marry me and will keep her word. *Après cela le déluge.* Marry, it seems to have come already!"

## CHAPTER XXI

### THICKENING CLOUDS

"For God doth know how many now in health  
Shall drop their blood in approbation  
Of what your reverence shall invite us to."

—*King Henry V.*

The memorable November of 1718 brought days fraught with excitement and peril to the Colony, which lay open to that high-way of rogues, the free-booting sea. Event followed event with such rapidity, and so absorbed were the colonists in the public weal that few had time for the indulgence of private woe.

Late on the afternoon of November the 4th, clad in his armor for the first time upon American soil, amidst the plaudits of the people, the Governor stepped aboard his flagship, the *Mediterranean*. Following him closely was Captain Maynard, who took command of the *Revenge*, which was the old *Royal James* of piratical fame, captured by Rhett and himself in Cape Fear River.

Standing bare-headed upon the prow, the fair folds of the flag of His Majesty streaming above him, the golden light of afternoon falling upon his noble face and shining harness, the Governor gave the signal for departure. Forthwith a mighty cheer went up, anchors were raised, canvas bellied upon

the freshening breeze, and sped with the prayers and the enthusiasm of the people, the fleet dropped out with the tide to Fort Johnson, where the Governor purposed to anchor for the night.

Vivid as a cardinal-bird in her crimson paduasoy, Damaris stood on the wharf bracing herself against a palmetto post, and far out to sea the last glimpse caught by two pairs of straining eyes was that gleam of red in the blending greys.

Cheer upon cheer rent the air around her; in its enthusiasm the crowd surged against her, pressing and drifting from side to side, for well-nigh all the Province was there. Hearts beat high and voices were loud in praise of the doughty Governor, in whom they felt their trust well placed, and who, more wisely than another, would lead this expedition of such weighty consequence to their welfare.

"It is time to go home, Mistress Damaris," said some one softly.

Mr. Yonge had been standing long unnoticed beside her. Patiently he had waited until the rim of the sun had slipped out of the primrose sky behind the dim woodlands beyond, till the tropical dusk had passed like a heavy grey-winged bird over them, and now the unharvested fruit of the sky hung its starry clusters in the blue-black night.

Damaris turned and looked upon him with eyes that seemed to have come from a death-watch, eyes to which his face was as that of a stranger; then, with a long sigh and without a word, she slipped her hand into his arm.

The crowd had scattered; a few straggling groups loitered about the water-side. Even in the darkness they recognized the Governor's daughter, and saluted her deferentially. Sergeant McLeod was standing beside the coach, where the English horses pawed impatiently. He opened the door and Damaris entered silently, Mr. Yonge following; then, trailing his bonnet in the dust, the Sergeant spoke:

"Her Ledyship, Mistress Kildare, was making sair havers over your Ledyship's tarrying, and it's myself as would be saying a murrain upon all sich unsonsy bodies, if it was myself as suld be wanting in respect for the leddies of quality, which God forbid! She was saying she could nae tarry sae long for your Ledyship, since she was like to catch a megrim from the sea damp. She would say to your Ledyship as how she was expecting to have you bide with her till his Excellency comes hame and will hear no clavers contrairiwise, seeing as she is set clean upon it."

"Go to her, Mistress Damaris, I prithee," urged Francis Yonge.

"No," said Damaris, shaking her head decidedly, "I want to be alone. Father said that I might do as I pleased. He left Sergeant McLeod in charge, and all will be well."

The grizzled Scot trailed his bonnet yet lower in the dust and stood to attention like a grenadier.

"And who suld be doing as she pleases, if not the young Mistress, Mr. Yonge?" asked the Sergeant reprovingly; then turning to Damaris, he spoke calmly: "And your Ledyship shall do as she

pleases as long as this chiel of the clan McLeod has the arm of a man and a good broad blade. It's a bawbie my life is, my bonny Leddy, but the bawbie is yours to the death. And dinna ye greet for the absent; as sure as the tide turns will they come hame, and that in the cooling of a bowl o' parrich, and a chancey gang of reiving villains will they be bringing in airn garters, and string them up we will like onions on the rafters; and it's the Governor himself will be standing by to say amen when their souls go to hell, God helping!"

"Thank you, Sergeant," she answered, reaching out her hand to him, and he touched it as he might have done the wings of the cherubim. I will trust you whatever betide."

"It's a puir hieland chiel I am, and its muckle honor your Leddyship does to the clan o' McLeod," he answered warmly, then he clambered upon the box. "Gie the beasties their head, Carson," he ordered, and the moment after they were lurching along through the narrow, ill-lighted streets that led from the wharf. In the darkness and silence of the lumbering coach Mr. Yonge covered with his own the cold little hand that lay so slackly upon the knee of the girl. She did not resist, but began straightway to talk of indifferent things, for she had reached that point where sympathy was pain; furthermore, the consciousness of herself shamed her and flamed at his voice and his touch. The glooming wall of the indeterminate future was suddenly cloven asunder, and through the widening cleft she saw herself as she would be, fighting back

the thing that was herself, living a life that was a lie.

Reaching in silence the Governor's gate, Mr. Yonge helped Damaris out. Turning to him she said wearily, with a wan little smile:

"I would indeed be sorry company for any one this evening. Prithee, leave me to my own dull thoughts and seek elsewhere merrier company."

"By my faith, I will do nothing of the kind. Do you take me for a motley with cap and bells?" he answered indignantly.

"It were kinder," she pleaded, and something in her face convinced him against his hot humor.

"A most wilful woman, certie," he replied, regarding her with a perplexed smile. "This once will I give you your way, seeing that you will have it at any cost," he laughed somewhat unmerrily. "Good-night, sweetheart; bon voyage to the land of dreams. May mine be your waking star."

"Fool, fool, fool!" he was saying to himself as he walked jauntily away. "Milksop to be put off with her hand when she is my promised wife. White-blooded, soft-headed, puritanical—pshaw! I taste the psalm singing! Zounds! I believe I am a woman myself—and such adorable lips, fresh and untasted! And yet," he said, stretching out his arm and bending it slowly backward, "there is good red blood in that arm, and never before fell it back at a woman's word; and I am not just winning my spurs either, I am rather a scarred veteran in affairs of arms. I was ever fancy's fool!" he ended, tapping his forehead with a grim smile; then an

ugly frown deepened upon the handsome brow of Francis Yonge, and thoughts not pleasant came to him. "Whether she loves me or loves me not, I will hold her to her word, and she will not break it, come what may—she is her father's daughter. Damme, but a man spoils his temper and woos wrinkles when he falls in love with one woman; and in numbers there is peace. I believe there is a crowfoot already," he laughed ruefully, passing his hand about his eyes. "Methinks I will turn in at the White Horse for a throw of the dice for luck."

As he stood irresolutely, out of the tavern windows flickered the lights hazily through the smoke, and above the sound of voices that drifted out into the night rose the shrill laughter of a girl.

"By the Lord Harry, there is Spanish Nell dancing a fandango, and the wanton is turned as nobly as Phryne. What a pucker about nothing! 'Twill be a sorry old world when wine, women and cards shall fail!" Setting his hat upon his well-curled wig with the elegant carriage of a gentleman of fashion, Mr. Yonge entered the tavern.

About the long, low room, smoked and smoke-dim, hot with the breath of men and the breath of wine, in chairs well pushed back, some half score gentlemen; crowding about the doors, sailors, eager-eyed and applauding; on the mantel, with legs and sword dangling, sat a swarthy seaman, picturesque and desperate, who might have been the king of the pirates himself. Upon a harp he played with no unskilful fingers a fantastic and musical air.

On the long deal table, from which the flagons and bottles had been unceremoniously shifted to the floor, a girl danced to the capricious measure of the harp. The Castilian grace in the poise of the small, dark head, and the witching shadows under the liquid eyes, suggested the blood of some free-booting rover from the Spanish main. Flashing with light and color as a jewel in the sunlight, the girl poised upon her dainty toes, waving her arms above her head in sensuous rhythm, the melody of the dance quivering in every delicious curve of her lithe, warm body.

"A guinea for the 'Lillies of Castile,' Nelly!" called Mr. Yonge gaily, pressing through the crowd of seamen about the door.

"It is not your lillies but your roses that he is wanting, Nelly!" laughed a sailor.

"It is Nelly herself he is wanting to buy with his English gold!" called another.

"Silence, you dogs!" cried Mr. Yonge angrily. "The 'Lillies of Castile,' Nelly," he repeated coaxingly, holding up the gold piece in his fingers.

"Gad, I'll make it two, Nelly!" cried the cadet of a noble English house, springing to his feet with a flushed boyish face.

"Three, Nelly, with a kiss thrown in!" added a stout, dissolute man, pounding upon the arm of his chair with his pewter flagon.

The girl balanced herself gracefully upon the edge of the table, leaning forward until her white bosom swelled above her crimson kerchief. Out of her eyes into the compelling eyes of Francis Yonge



slipped a long, slow ray of bewildering light that seemed to hold in it all of the girl's vivid, passionate personality. The warm lips breathed a sigh as she reached out her slim brown hand like one groping in the dark. As the pretty head was lowered Francis Yonge leaned toward her with his brilliant, enticing smile, and there, as he would have whispered a word, he saw among the shadowy curls a scarlet pomegranate blossom. Had she struck him he could not have recoiled more quickly; the hot room melted into a space frosty and crystalline that held only a pair of scornful grey eyes.

"Nay, Nellie," he spoke mockingly, "methinks I have changed my mind like a woman. Rather than lillies would I have that blossom in your hair. A guinea for a blossom is a fair good price."

Straightening herself with a reckless laugh, the girl passed the blossom to him, and as he stuck it jauntily into his coat the gold chinked at her feet. She gave a signal with the tambourine in her hand, the harper struck up a vibrant melody, and she fell into the rhythm of a dance like which there is none other in reckless grace and abandon, save only the nautch dance of the East.

But for Francis Yonge the "Lillies of Castile" was danced in vain; in bitterness and rage the girl saw him disappear through the doorway. Outside in the street he ground the scarlet flower wrathfully into the dust with his heel.

"Damaris's flower in the hair of a tavern girl!" he groaned. "And I—I am like to become a saint, Saint Francis; Saint Francis of Assisi! By my

faith, a right pious sound it has! And the proper place for a saint after candle-light is in bed. You are a fool, Francis Yonge, and all for the sake of a woman who gives you but a cold little hand!" With an impatient laugh he strode through the darkness.

## CHAPTER XXII

### NOBLESSE OBLIGE

"You think I'll weep;  
No, I'll not weep.  
I have full cause of weeping, but this heart  
Shall break into a hundred thousand flames  
Or ere I'll weep."

—*King Lear.*

While it was yet dark on the morning of November the 5th Damaris, shivering with cold and excitement, was warming herself before a freshly lighted fire in the dining-room. Restlessly she crossed to the window. Outside the cold had come sharply and in sudden fashion, as is its wont in this climate, and a soft white rime shone upon the magnolias and upon the drooping fringes of the bananas. As she turned away she staggered a little, and then she remembered she had eaten nothing since yesterday's breakfast. She crossed over to the dresser, poured out a glass of Madeira and broke off a fragment of bread, for she realized that she needed all of her strength. When the hoofs of the horses rang sharply on the frosted drive she went quickly without.

"Good-morning, Sergeant."

"It's a verra fine morning, Mistress; a verra fine morning to sleep. It's a puir shame to be leaving

your warm kivers and giving up your tender body to the frost, and it's the Governor will be kilting me up in a tow for aiding and abetting you, and verra right he will be. But I am a puir Scots body, none sae stout in spirit, and am at your service freely. It is about the wharves I have been taking my naps all night, for the sake o' the caller air, and sound there was none frae the sea save the sough of the waters, and never a sight save the blink o' the stars, and nae more people there seemed in the world than last year's snow on the graves in the kirk-yard. Its nae denying, we all hae our frailties," he ended mournfully.

"Troth, I hope it is no frailty to serve another, else I fear me there is no sound spot in you, Sergeant," answered Damaris warmly as he wrapped her in the robes.

"'Tis a kittle cast she has gien me to play. The Governor is nae a man to be bumbaized, but syne it's her play I'll nae baulk her for all the hempen cravates in the colonies," he grumbled to himself as he climbed to the box and gave the word to drive to the Watch House.

In joyful surprise the astonished guard welcomed the Governor's daughter to his cheerless best. However, cold and discomfort were as naught to her now, for sorrow deadens the body to its natural wants. She sat there, letting pain have its will of her through the long, silent waiting. The blackness of dawn wore away to the dim threadbareness that foretells the light; then like a white flower, petals rose-tinged, the day opened out of the grey

emptiness of dawn; across the vague sea, where the mist lay like rolls of lamb's wool, passed a waning line of sea-birds; from out of a tree hard by came the waking song of a mocking-bird. With notes clear and pure as though born of the light, he saluted the sun; and with the gladness of the bird came a gladness into the heart of the girl, for out on the waters, come life or come death, was the man who loved her. He had been true to his faith, let the tragedy finish as it would.

Damaris was the first but not the only anxious watcher that morning, for from tidings received it was surmised that the encounter would be speedy and at no great distance from the town.

Shortly before eight o'clock a small pink came in, bringing the intelligence that the Governor's fleet had weighed anchor quietly about dawn. With no warlike show, but to all appearance outward-bound merchantmen, straight they had steered to where the pirate fleet lay at anchor without. Intense excitement now prevailed. Damaris, awaiting she knew not what, stood in the window of the upper guard-room. Her hood had fallen back and the cold wind played upon her white face with its wide, intent eyes.

Old Mr. Maynard coming upon here there, had established himself as her guardian, and had ordered a cup of coffee to be fetched from a neighboring tavern; but never for a moment would the faithful Sergeant pass beyond ear-shot, though the winds blew chill and the sign of the Mermaid beckoned temptingly.

Meanwhile, half a dozen indignant messages had come from Lady Kildare, to all of which Damaris sent polite refusals, which the trembling footman carried each time in greater trepidation to his mistress.

Suddenly out of the distance came a low, dull sound. Like the booming of a great billow it seemed, but to every watcher it brought a thrill of excitement.

"The first gun!" said Mr. Maynard quietly, laying his hand upon the arm of the listening girl, though indeed she showed no sign of excitement. "They have come within range of the enemy," he added, as dull report followed dull report. "We'll give it to them to-day, never fear!"

"May the Lord of Hosts be with us!" spoke devoutly a dissenting elder who had joined the group.

"May the hoodie crows fatten on their thieving marrow; may the deil hae a warm hame-coming for his ain!" ejaculated Sergeant McLeod with equal devoutness as he closed up behind with the crowd.

Eager eyes strained seaward trying to penetrate the hazing blue of the distance, but nothing saw they save the long sweep of the gulls cleaving the water, nothing heard they save the dull distance-softened reports that told them that out there upon the waste of waters, almost at their door, life fought against life, law against outlawry, right against might; but what would be the outcome of the fierce struggle no man could tell.

Sometimes a shout, sometimes a groan followed the report as the humor was sanguine or otherwise.

Upon the whole the crowd was inclined to be cheerful, keeping up its courage, in part, by recourse to the tavern when sound there was none from the sea.

For a time passing patience the sound of firing had ceased; the bell of the Watch House struck twelve, the crowd that had pressed to the water's edge clinging to every point of observation now began to break up and go off to its nooning, for the intense wave of excitement had ebbed a little from its flush tide.

Suddenly came a diversion, a sloop was seen heading for the town from the direction of Sullivan's Island.

"Colonel Rhett, Colonel Rhett!" some one shouted, and the people took up the cry. In the excitement of the larger undertaking they had well-nigh forgotten his chase.

The trim little craft showed a clean pair of heels to the wind, and shortly was making fast to the wharf, while the people crowded to see the deck where a man stood guarded and heavily ironed.

"Bonnet, Bonnet!" the cry passed on. "Rogue and outlaw, murderer and thief! Swing him up to the yard-arm; all the shriving in the world could not whiten his soul!"

"There was another!"

"Dead!" some one answered.

"Pity to cheat the gallows with an honest bullet!" groaned a sailor.

"At him, at him!" roared the frenzied crowd.

Damaris shuddered as she looked down upon the surging fury that pressed toward the prisoner. Al-

ready men were in the water clutching at the sloop's sides, their knives in their teeth.

Upon the deck stepped Colonel Rhett, cool and debonair and commanding. With an ironical smile he swept the furious mob.

"Allow the prisoner to pass!" he spoke quietly.

A sullen mutter was the only reply, a long arm swept from the water and grasped the gunwale.

"You are delaying the course of justice, citizens!" spoke Colonel Rhett as quietly as before; but there was a flash in his eye and he laid his hand lightly upon his pistol. "Fall back!" he commanded authoritatively.

There was a moment of irresolution, then the swimmers splashed discontentedly to the shore with muttered curses, and upon the wharf the men fell back, leaving a passageway through which passed the desperate pirate, sullen-faced, reckless, with clanking irons.

Damaris, in the window above, heard the story of the capture told by Colonel Rhett to his eager questioners. Handsome and gallant as usual, his crimson cloak correct in its folds, not a dishevelled curl in his well-set wig, he told of it as he might have described a London rout.

"A very simple story truly, and a right inglorious conquest. I felt like a lad chasing pigs in the myrtles. There we came upon them in a bushy lair cooking some ill-smelling pork. Rashly my men fired. Heriot was killed, a negro and Indian wounded, Bonnet surrendered. Here we are, Bonnet to await his trial, I to find some dinner. Wretched poor cook



that cabin-boy. Damme, bad cooking is a more murderous offense than piracy, methinks! Good-morning, gentlemen," he laughed ironically, "I feel like a stage hero with a pewter sword!"

Damaris drew back into the shelter of the window, she wanted no greetings from him. "Were it not for his most unruly temper my father would not be out yonder on the seas," she said to herself resentfully. "And a man of such approved courage, too!"

"Won't you come and have a bite of dinner with me, Mistress Damaris? Good courage and good appetite go together," said Mr. Maynard kindly.

"Indeed, I am truly obliged, but I would rather not," she answered, shaking her head resolutely.

"Humph, live on air!" he growled. Small patience had he with women and with their vagaries; against this woman in particular he held a grievance. "Bowled my boy over deuced unfair," he had been saying to harden his heart against her. "But she is a plucky lass; no tears and don't squeal. Pure stock, good action, plenty of speed. Why didn't Bob Johnson and I settle it between us and not leave it to two unbroken colts." He shook his head ruefully as he walked away.

"Better change your mind and come; woman's privilege, you know." He had risked the overcooking of his beef and come back to urge her. "She looked as if she were going to bowl over," he said to himself in self-justification. "Our mothers were women and we must look after the weaker sex."

"Thank you; no, I am not hungry; but you are very kind."

"Zounds! Madam, I am no such thing, I am barely civil," he disclaimed, and rushed away ingloriously before her sad eyes should quite undo his righteous indignation.

Upon the wharf below came Mr. Richard Allein, who immediately became the center of a questioning crowd.

"Has the verdict been given?" they asked as with one voice.

"The verdict has been given," he replied gravely. "Twenty-two of the pirates have received sentence of death. They will be hanged by the neck until they are dead upon White Point Garden on the 8th day of November in this year of Our Lord 1718, being three days from this present."

From the people a shout went up. Damaris buried her face in her hands.

"Where will your humor lead you next, Mistress Damaris?" asked Mr. Yonge. He was flushed in face and decidedly out of humor.

"In truth, I know not; but wherever it leads I will follow," she answered defiantly.

"By my faith, that you will not; 'tis high time that I assert my authority!"

"Your authority?" she asked haughtily.

"Certes; the promise that I hold from you means something, does it not, wilful Mistress?" he asked irately.

"It means no more than I choose," she answered with sudden quiet. "Is it a time to harry me about

trifles when that is going on over yonder?" she asked with glooming eyes, pointing out to sea.

"Even now my father and my—"

"Finish!" he said savagely.

"My father and my countrymen are in peril of their lives," she answered with dignity.

Francis Yonge took several pinches of snuff. When he spoke his voice was gentler.

"Pardon my heat, sweetheart; 'tis enough to ruffle a man's temper to find his plighted lady forgetful of her position and of its obligations, consorting unattended with the rabble, when but a word would have brought her proper protector to her."

"I am the best judge of what is fitting my position and its obligations. For the rest we will discontinue this argument for this present, seeing that thoughts of deeper moment press."

"Forgive me, fair, sweet friend; I am a brute!" he pleaded. Too late he saw his mistake. "You are so confoundedly adorable and reckless that a man loses his head as well as his heart."

She accepted the apology in silence, nor shifted her eyes from the horizon. She was exhausted and unnerved; every word cost some of her failing strength.

"You are overtired. Prithee, go home, sweet friend; I will send you tidings," he begged in genuine concern. She shook her head.

"It isn't possible that you have fasted all day?" She shook her head, mendaciously this time.

“So, Mistress Damaris, I have not tarried long away, have I?” asked Mr. Maynard eagerly. “And I have brought you a bite of bread and meat, and a sup of wine. You won’t hurt an old man’s feelings by refusing it; there’s nothing like strong victuals to hearten one up!” He beamed all over as he handed her the little basket, and Damaris, deeply touched, thanked him more with her eyes than with words, and to show her appreciation struggled bravely to eat a portion thereof, with an occasional pat of encouragement from her converted enemy.

Meanwhile, Mr. Yonge looked on in a chagrined silence new to him, and in secret heaped upon himself and upon fortune the refinement of malediction. Truly the day had gone badly for him. He had begun as usual with his cup of chocolate in bed, then had followed his perfumed and luxurious bath, his leisurely and exquisite toilet, the making of which had cost his man more than a bad quarter of an hour. After a deliberate breakfast he had strolled to the wharf to seek tidings for Damaris. There he had loitered from group to group, but had failed through strange mischance to learn of her presence there. At the Governor’s he had learned that she was away from home; where, the servant knew not. Thinking to find her with Lady Kildare, he proceeded there, where his disappointment and her well-informed Ladyship incited him to his recent attack of spleen.

As long as things drifted along upon the slack tide of commonplace event, Lady Kildare was sure of Damaris; but she did not trust her under the

stress of danger and emotion. "The Johnsons were always uncommon people," she grumbled to herself, "and uncommon people upset the wisest calculations." Lady Kildare frowned and struck the floor irately with her jewelled cane. She was a resolute woman, and had no idea of being balked in her plan by a girl's whim. She had become infatuated with her plan of paying her debt to the Yonge lying under his carven effigy in Worcester Cathedral, and would not be stayed by the love and hates of others.

Again in the afternoon were the townsfolk assembled upon the wharf; a new thrill of excitement stirred them. Gentleman and yeoman, Quaker and churchman, negro and merchant, Indian and artizan pressed shoulder to shoulder in the crowd, women squealed in the press, children cried, dogs barked, waiting horses neighed, when suddenly at about three in the afternoon, upon the dim line of the horizon, a dark speck grew in size to the bigness of a ship's hulk. Then waited they with bated breath, the only sound the thrill of humanity that pulsed in the sunlight air. Was she their own ship or the pirate? was the unspoken question in the hearts of all. Two ships showed now, moving in company, and still the people waited with tense breath. Loud and clear upon the thrilled air rang out from the Watch House, in a woman's voice, the glad cry, "It is the King's ensign!" Looking up the people saw the Governor's daughter standing there like a prophetess with hand uplifted to the sky. Damaris's clear eyes, love quickened, had

been the first to learn the truth. A shout went up from the loosened hearts of the people. With fair speed came the staunch ship onward with the second ship in her wake. "It is the *Mediterranean!*" called out the joyful voice of the girl, and the cheers were like to rend the air, and somewhere the voice of the devout Quaker was uplifted above the tumult, "The Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge!" and a hearty amen went through the crowd like the voice of many waters. An exceeding great tumult ensued when the good ship came at last to her moorings, and with her her pirate prize full freighted with villains black-browed, bearded, desperate, cursing their fetters.

As the Governor stepped upon shore quick to his arms sped Damaris. He was no longer Governor, nor she the lady of the mansion—father and daughter were they, meeting after a day of anguish and peril. Holding fast to her hand, with the grave, well-content look of a man who, by the grace of God, has accomplished his purpose, he told the story of the fight. Simply he told how in the early morning, with men beneath decks and guns masked, under the semblance of merchantmen, they had dropped down to where the pirates lay. The ruse being successful, the black flag was quickly run up to the masthead of the pirate and to that of her tender, both of whom straightway steered to the mouth of the bar there to intercept the suspected flight of the merchantmen. Whereupon the King's ensign was speedily hoisted, men summoned to deck, guns uncovered and a broadside raked the nearer pirate's

deck with deadly effect. Now began at close quarters, in frightful earnest, the battle which filled the pirates with consternation, sixty-eight guns being trained upon them when they lay trapped between the shore and Governor Johnson's vessels.

With daring seamanship the pirate ship doubled and showed a clean pair of heels, while the *Mediterranean*, signaling to the *King William*, which was the fastest sailer, to follow, fell into pursuit, the *Revenge* and the *Sea Nymph* being signaled to handle the sloop.

A warm chase and a determined one brought the pursuers up to the flying pirate, who in desperation lightened her of her guns and boats, but to no purpose, for she was doomed. A blasting fire from the *King William* raked the pirate and ripped an incurable gash in her side, whereupon the black flag was lowered and she made forthwith unconditional surrender.

To the great wonderment of the captors the prize, which hailed as the *New York Revenge*, proved to be the *Eagle*, bound from London to Virginia and Maryland, carrying as passengers 106 convicts and "covenant" servants, many of whom were women. Those of the crew who would not join the pirates were impressed or held as prisoners.

"And the others?" asked Damaris with tightening hand upon her father's, when the recital but not the applause was ended.

"Never fear," answered the Governor heartily, "they cannot be long behind."

And true it was, for within a couple of hours the *Revenge* and the *Sea Nymph* came gallantly in, the King's ensign bravely alive in the golden light of afternoon, floating also above the pirate sloop where skull and cross-bones were wont to threaten.

Again huzzahs, again joy that knew no bounds, as Captain Maynard stepped from the many-storied *Revenge* that rocked so peacefully at her moorings against the glory of the daffodil sky.

In the face of the young Captain was the triumph of battle; he had fought a good fight and he knew it. Smirched was he with powder and smoke, and the bravery of the King's scarlet defaced with rent and stain.

Bareheaded he stood, while the Governor held out his hand to him. Warmly he grasped it, but to Mistress Damaris he bowed as to any other lady of quality; but the deathless light in the eyes that sought hers for a moment, meeting there the deathless light, wakened anew the tragedy of two brave lives.

"Warm work, Captain," said the Governor cheerily. "Tell us your story."

"It is easy to tell," answered the Captain, with a light laugh.

"Not easy to have done," answered the Governor proudly.

"Well, I had good men and they would not be beaten; that is my story. For the rest, they held us for four hours at yard-arms, and fiercer fighters I hope never to fall foul of. Ours was the advantage in guns, theirs in recklessness; but so sharply



we raked them that many went below. We boarded her, but they fought to the death—more desperate courage I have never seen; and the chief, like a lion at bay, went down at last with a dozen wounds. Weltering in gore, he still raised his cutlass till one of our men hacked his arm from the shoulder. When at last we got the ship in hand, men in irons, I felt like taking off my hat to the prisoners and their dead," he ended gravely.

Congratulations and questions poured in upon the young man from every side, and the Governor and his daughter were swept away by the crowd to another quarter, where the Governor learned to his great dismay, from his sailing master, that the captured pirate was not Moody as he supposed, but one Richard Worley, an even greater and more redoubtable desperado.

Here was a new complication vastly unpleasant. Where was Moody? It was probable that he still hovered within neighboring inlets, ready to fall upon them at any moment, and so an alert watch must be kept at all points; also it was decided to maintain the fleet ready for service, for the work of extermination having once been begun must be pushed to a safe finish else were the Colony in greater extremes.

All arrangements having been made, the Governor finally joined Damaris where he had placed her in the carriage, seeing that her strength was so far spent and being ever solicitous for her.

The fine breeding of Mr. Yonge, reinforced by his common sense, had made him take himself off after a tender farewell, and Lady Kildare being de-

tained at home by the apprehended megrim, the girl was free from restraint and leaned back with a sense of something having been too far stretched, about to break.

Captain Maynard came up to her side of the carriage while some one engaged the Governor upon the other.

"I am glad," she said, reaching out her hand, with a smile.

"Must it go on as it is, Damaris?" he asked as he crushed her hand in his own, powder-stained.

"Truly, unto the end?" she answered, avoiding his eyes.

"A man has a right to his own!" he claimed hotly. He was flushed with the spirit of conquest and battles won by his own right arm.

"Truth, but not to that of another. Free gift, fast bond," she answered pitifully.

"You gave, not knowing," he urged; "you cannot hold to that hollow bond. Nature cries against such wrong; there can be no happiness! We love each other, and by heaven, there can be no right in the thing you would do!"

"Surely," she answered gently; "Noblesse oblige!" she ended with a half sob.

"I was a coward to ask!" he cried remorsefully.

The Governor looked around at the two troubled faces. Their last words had come to him and there was a puzzled look on his fine old face. He was near to questioning, but he checked himself.

"Good-by, Captain. We have made a good day of it. Come to me soon," he said cordially. "Home, Carson."

He passed his arm around Damaris. With the swift prescience of woman and with the bravest smile of her life, the girl looked up and spoke brightly:

"It is good to have you back, and I am glad Mr. Yonge was not out there too. Truly, to have had a father and a declared lover both upon the seas would have made me feel like the lady in the ballad," she ended with a little laugh.

"And how about the undeclared?" he asked jestingly.

"Oh, they come and go in a lifetime; like the tides with the moon," she answered lightly.

Reassured by her tone, the Governor, in the shadow of the carriage, kissed her tenderly; then, for his mind was full of grave matters, he began anew in his thoughts to work out the salvation of the Colony.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE WAY OF THE WORLD

"To form devices quick is woman's wit."

—*Euripides.*

It was late December, close to Christmastide, though flowers bloomed and soft airs blew. Damaris, with the heedless sweetness of wind-flowers in her face, sat with her work-basket in the deep seat of the drawing-room window, though few were the stitches that fell in the Governor's ruffles, the wistful eyes of the girl seeking oftener the blue stretch of the bay or the still, lush luxuriance of the garden.

There came suddenly the grating of wheels, the sound of voices, the sharp click of high heels upon the polished cypress floors, the rustle of silk, the odor of musk and mille-fleurs, and Lady Kildare stood within the door, shaking her cane at Damaris.

"So, Mistress Damaris, are you napping in the daytime, that you come not to welcome a guest?"

"I was sewing," said Damaris, "and thinking. Prithee, be welcome." She drew up a chair and a footstool and divested her Ladyship of mantle and furs.

"Mercy on me, child, 'tis freezing in here! What, windows up in midwinter! You had better live in tents and be done with it."

"I did consider it once, but methought your Ladyship disapproved; perhaps 'tis not yet too late?" Damaris smiled wickedly as she shut out the sweet, mild air.

"'Tis never too late to be a fool!"

"Nor too late to begin to be wise," she replied significantly as she threw a knot of light-wood upon the few coals remaining from the morning fire, for in the damp, mild climate of the Province the early fire is a wise precaution.

"Methinks that you have not been growing in wisdom lately," spoke Lady Kildare sharply.

Damaris laid on two cedar logs with great precision, then she took down the bellows. The scarlet tongues of the light-wood flickered warmly about her round arms and played vividly over her face and white gown as she knelt, protracting the fire making with slow upliftings of her white arms and graceful swayings of her lithe body. That Lady Kildare had come to give battle, she doubted not, but she would delay the onset as long as she might. She had not seen her Ladyship since the memorable watch on the wharf, partly because she had found it convenient to avoid her summons, partly because her Ladyship had been attending to affairs upon her plantation, for despite her scorn of domesticity, she managed with discretion a large and lucrative estate inherited from a brother who had died in the Province.

"One's wisdom depends upon one's standpoint," Damaris temporized slowly.

"The standpoint of youth is ever a foolish one."

"The standpoint of youth is a happy one—it has no yesterdays and no to-morrow."

"Why don't you call a servant to make that fire?" inquired Lady Kildare impatiently.

"I love to kindle fires," said Damaris sweetly, spreading her hands before the scarlet flames. Her antagonist was thinking how pretty she looked kneeling there, and 'twas a pity she would not kindle fires before her gallants; but she would not be softened.

"Come and sit down; you are monstrous unmannerly."

Damaris obeyed and took up her work.

"Pardon, your Ladyship; 'tis a vastly fine day," she spoke demurely.

"The day does well enough," shortly.

"I trust your Ladyship finds herself in health," sweetly.

"My health is passing good. But harkye, I didn't come here to be cozened like a dowager; I came to find out what is the meaning of your conduct? Don't say a word, I've heard of your junketings. What do you mean by traipsing about the wharves like a sailor's lass?"

"I am a sailor's lass, since my father has taken to the high-seas. I sing sailor ballads and none other now.

"It's a crying shame!" her antagonist fumed.

"To love one's father or to sing sailor ballads?" asked Damaris innocently.

"Father, fiddlesticks! I'm no boarding-school mistress to be deceived with twaddle; I know your game!"

Damaris set a careful stitch in the Governor's lace, while her face grew white.

"Indeed, then 'twere useless for your Ladyship to ask questions," she answered coolly.

"I don't need to ask questions; all the world can see!"

"'Tis a wise world." She set another careful stitch in the Flemish ruffle.

"You are acting in a very foolish and reckless manner. If you have not a care your good fortune will slip through your fingers. Men are not greatly given to endurance where women are concerned, and Francis Yonge inherits a temper. Why don't you listen to reason?"

"I do, to my own."

"How now, saucy Miss, have done with you; reason companies not with rash blood, it is the fruit of experience. Girls and May moons and March hares for madness."

"All the world is mad, more or less."

"Don't be cynical, it isn't becoming to the young."

"Ah, blessed age, full of years and privileges, come to me quickly! Is anything becoming to the young?" asked the girl innocently.

"Yes, respect and obedience to its betters. When young people shall come to admit that they are not wiser than their elders the Kingdom of Heaven shall not be far off!"

"When young people live their own lives they find it within themselves sometimes!" cried Damaris warmly.

"Harkye, don't be sacrilegious; it is a sorry wit that hedges itself behind the prophets. I am tired

of whims and pliskies; are you going to be sensible?"

"That, indeed, I cannot say. Often have I tried it, but according to your Ladyship I have failed so woefully that I might even be foolish and enjoy myself. The world is a festival for fools and the wise wear themselves out trying to enlighten them."

"Don't sharpen your wits upon me; I abhor clever women!"

"Truly, that must be vastly uncomfortable. Father says that a moderate amount of self-respect is necessary to a good digestion."

"By the same you must have a monstrous fine one!"

"So I have. Another one of the evils of youth, your Ladyship!"

"So also is an unruly tongue!"

"'Tis comfortable to think that that will pass away with my blushes and the rest of youth's vices.

"I misdoubt the same; what is bred in the bone aye holds its own. But a truce to your parlousness; what of Francis Yonge?"

"Faith, I trust no mischance has befallen him?"

"That know you best. A more distempered swain have I never set eyes upon. Sour, morose, cross-grained beyond endurance. He had the effrontery to tell me that my Madeira was wine of the Western Isles. As though I knew not the difference between mellow Madeira and the thin vintages with which smugglers do flood the market. By the Lord Harry, it is a sad world when every one knows better than oneself! What have you done to him?"

"Nothing, your Ladyship."



What are you going to do with him after all of these triflings?"

"Marry him, I suppose—Proprietors, pirates and Indians permitting."

"So you will be sensible after all."

"Perchance! Being sensible and doing right seem not always to be the same thing—more oft it is wrong."

"Right and wrong indeed! And who are you, Miss, that you dare declare what is right and what is wrong? Very interchangeable words, I assure you."

"They ought not so to be. Right and wrong should be as different as day and night."

"Right and wrong are two faces to a die—chance turns them up and chance they are. To be wise is always to believe that you have done right."

"To be wise, it seems, one must be born without a conscience."

"So be it; a conscience does nothing but spoil one's temper and digestion, make crowfeet and misogamists."

"A woman ought to be quite sure that she loves a man ere she weds, else she were not honest."

"Fiddlesticks! 'Tis vastly modish to speak of loving your husband in plays and romances; 'tisn't done in genteel society."

"To love a man better than her own life, better than her sweet will, better than her hope of heaven, better than her fear of hell, that meseems were the part of a true woman when she weds!"

Damaris spoke earnestly, with glowing eyes.

"Kitchen wenches marry for love because establishments don't go down the backstairs. But their creed is nature, none of your hifaluting nonsense!" replied her Ladyship scornfully.

"Then are kitchen wenches the happier and the braver!" cried the girl, undaunted.

"Nonsense; to love some one is to furnish a weapon against oneself!" spoke her Ladyship emphatically.

"Truly, the world is not slow to furnish them otherwise."

"Love cankers reason!" sneered her Ladyship.

"It makes warm hearts."

"Cool heart, long head."

"Furthermore, why should we haste to wed—we know so little of men. Of what they really are, of what they have been and will be, of what stains may lie upon their past, of what sins may stand between us!"

"Don't you be worrying about their pasts, child; their future is enough for the reckoning of a woman. Don't be filling your head with dreams of bloodless shadows of spotless knights. Do you think that men are made after the fashion of nuns, that they should have a frost-bitten past all white and passionless?"

"I think that a man should hold no secrets from his wife, yet that he should tell her nothing that would shame her."

"Fore the Lord Harry, the world isn't a nunnery, child, and the powers be praised that it isn't. Take the flowers, child, nor question the mud that made them grow. This world has lasted a consid-

erable time as it is, and is a pretty good place. I would have men pretty much as they are and women a little bit different—when they are young a little less tartness in the unripe fruit.”

“And I, I would have men as open-lived as women, and women true to their ideals!”

“Fiddlesticks! the world would tumble about our ears in less than a week. You need to go to London to have your education finished; you are sadly provincial. Ideals, moonshine! a woman’s whims are more mischievous than her vices!” sneered her Ladyship.

“If one only knew the truth,” spoke the girl in troubled wise, “life would be so much easier.”

“Truth, indeed. Truth ought to be kept at the bottom of a well; it is too rude and mischievous to move in good society,” retorted Lady Kildare sharply.

“Facts ought to stand for something. You cannot deny that bare facts have some value in life!”

“I abhor bare facts. I prefer mine breeched and ruffled!”

“Everything in life is so breeched and ruffled that one knows not what is real, what is false. There is illusion everywhere.”

“Forsooth, ’tis well. When humanity meets humanity without illusion the grace of life is destroyed.”

“Truly, it seems so,” answered Damaris sadly. Ugly enough her life looked to her now without illusion. She laid down her weapons, not because she felt herself worsted in her convictions, but be-

cause she had no heart for the conflict where her convictions were not supported by her conduct.

"Well, talk as you please, I am glad you are a Johnson and will hold to your word despite your coquetries. Not that coquetry is always bad. Oft-times it enhances a woman's value—a man seldom wants what he is sure of. One would think Francis Yonge a love-sick Corydon. Foolish creatures, men; more foolish than women, since women rule them. And what does our Robert Johnson, our hero of the high-seas? And what is the gossip of the Province, what new rottenness in politics? Is it true that Moody has claimed the King's pardon at New Providence, that the seas are safer for trade? Rumor brings me many things, but rumor was ever winged lies."

"Yes, your Ladyship, 'tis certainly true that Moody has availed himself of the King's pardon and that menace is removed from our coasts. Captain Smyter, of the *Minerva*, sailing from the Maderias, has so reported it. He states that he was overhauled by Moody, who robbed and released him, straightway sailing to New Providence to take advantage of the pardon brought out by Governor Woode Rogers.

"By my soul, 'tis well! Full sweetly have I slept since the first twenty-two fell outlaws captured by Rhett and Maynard swung high above White Point Garden the 10th day of this blessed November; still sweeter slept I when later the twenty-three more of Governor Johnson's prisoners swung there also, being buried in the quaking marshland above; good earth were too good for such carrion. May they

rest uneasy in their freehold. And Stede Bonnet—tell me of his trial, child; thou must have it at first hands.

“’Tis a story passing pitiful. I wept because of him, though my father berated me sorely therefor. Mr. Richard Allein has related it to me in full, ’twas most grievous. ’Tis said that he appealed most womanfully; ’twas like to have unmanned the Justice and Council. I would they had pardoned him! ’Tis authentically said that he was a Bermudan gentleman of education and fortune, inclined to his evil course of life, ’tis thought, by some unsoundness of the mind. He besought to be carried to England for trial, and Colonel Rhett, whose prisoner he was, offered to carry him. He threw himself at my father’s feet and begged piteously for his life. He won many sympathies for himself and many exercised themselves in his behalf because of the pitifulness of his case. My father was hard-pressed, being a merciful gentleman and kind; but he said he was a most notorious villain, one who had done great injuries to our coast, and for the safety of the Province and for the example, he dare not pardon him. Being a robber, an outlaw and a free-booter, old in crime, he must die. I do not like to think of it; I can almost hear him plead sometimes.” Damaris shuddered and passed her hand over her eyes.

Robert Johnson is right, they ought to be hung root and branch. Is it true that Nicholas Trott did deliver himself of a speech lengthy beyond enduring, and bristling with Scripture as twenty Dissenting tracts?”

“Indeed, your Ladyship, his speech was most amazing—a wonder of learning and law and Scripture, ’twas well-nigh beyond my kenning. Stede Bonnet, it is said, quoted Scripture even as learnedly as the Justice. The Justice’s speech was vastly moral; perhaps the lawyers knew the law already, I couldn’t make it out from the speech. Mr. Allein lent it to me. He said it was a most remarkable speech and most edifying. I read it from beginning to end. I hate the Justice, never fear; I but be-thought me to see what a monstrous hypocrite he is. ’Tis a very clever man he is, and a weighty one, therefore the likelier his secret designs to succeed with their Lordships in London. Methinks double dealing were as much of a hanging offense as piracy.”

“Thinks your father so?”

“Nay, not he, the greater pity! Because he is honest himself he distrusts not others. And he did think so he would not tell me; he says mine is an unlawful curiosity, that women have no business with politics. When I ask him a question he tells me to run and make a pudding. Oh, these men, how they anger me! They think that they can put women where they will, and there we will stay; that they will tell us what thoughts to think and so will we think them. Will none ever discover that the tide stays not for a man’s voice?”

“Nay, child, fret not thyself because of the ungodly; they will continue to flourish as long as women continue to rejoice that a man is born into the world. Man has enjoyed some centuries of

supremacy because of the superiority of his muscles; the brute still reigns!"

"Do you think that they will ever come to understand us?"

"Heaven forbid, child, that they should understand us; masked batteries are much more effective. Do you want to rob life of its interest and women of their power? Cling to the rouge and the patches and the mental mysteries—whatever makes woman different from man increases her power!"

"They think that they know all about us, and in reading us do ever misthink us."

"Thoughts fill no sails. Besides, the angels, than which man was made a little lower, were women. When he comes to recognize it, the millenium will not be far off."

"'Tis very far off now, methinks!"

"So much the better. In times of peace wits grow rusty and life becomes as a tale that is told."

"Truly, a woman's wit profits her little, seeing that man grows ever more and more."

"A woman without wit is like wine unfermented. As to man becoming more, there speaks the man; with the progress of civilization the woman becomes more; but seeing men be so slow of wit 'twill take them a hundred or two years to find it out. But a picayune for the thoughts of men as long as we lead them, and that as long as all be not turned priests and anchorites."

"It is a very puzzling world," sighed the girl. "One looks at things from six different angles and from each it looks different, though each seems to be right from that view. How can one ever know?"

"One isn't meant to know. One curious woman paid a sufficiently heavy price one idle day for a little useless knowledge of good and evil, and the race has been disturbed ever since. Don't fag yourself with thinking; do what is sensible, that is more to the point. Thinking destroys a woman's bloom, and no woman has a right to look ugly or tired. By so doing she destroys her charm and asserts her human limitations."

"I don't care about beauty and I don't care about charm; I don't care about lovers—they are enemies of a woman's peace of mind. I want to do right and I want to be happy; I have read that women were both," cried Damaris pathetically.

"L'enfant terrible. She wants to be an ideal woman!" gasped Lady Kildare, surveying her ironically.

"It is a great deal easier to be ideal than to be womanly. When one is ideal one ignores existing circumstances and lives in a dream; when one is womanly one accepts them and makes the best of them," maintained the girl angrily.

"'Pon my life, fiddlesticks and twaddle! The girl speaks like a parson and I can't abide the cloth, so I'll be going."

Lady Kildare spoke contemptuously, tapping the floor with her cane, while her eyes glowered.

"Shall I order your Ladyship's carriage?" asked Damaris promptly.

"You need not be in such a hurry, neither; for certain your manners need mending! There comes Robert Johnson, I'll but pass a word with him; not that he'll tell me anything worth knowing—a newt



and Robert Johnson for news. Forsooth, men are nasty necessities! Ah, Governor Johnson, charmed to see you." She rose with great courtesy, sweeping to him, despite her stiffening joints, the grand obeisance that she had made to the Grand Monarque when the beaux yeux of the English demoiselle were not unnoticed by his critical Majesty. From the folds of her tulip brocade floated the heavy perfumes of France, upon bosom and hand jewels flashed, above the cunning tower of white curls plumes nodded as she courtesied. "I have seldom the privilege of a chat with your Excellency nowadays," she added.

"The privilege is mine, your Ladyship, seeing that my house is honored by your presence." The Governor bowed low over the scented hand and raised it to his lips ceremoniously.

"Ta, ta, Governor, vastly modish beaux and belles are we; though we dwell in the wilderness, we are courtiers still. 'Tis the younger generation who lack breeding," she ended, with a sharp glance at Damaris.

The Governor looked quizzically at Damaris, who flushed warmly, answering with pretty audacity:

"Nay, father, methinks the discourtesy rests not all with the younger generation, seeing that the older do teach them to criticise their hostesses!"

"Truce, truce!" said Lady Kildare; "saucy baggage that you are. Forsooth, 'tis a changeling from the court of France." She chuckled pleasantly, tapping her shapely slipper with its flashing buckle. "What news in the wilderness, Governor?"

"Truth, Madam, I know none save what is known to yourself."

"Fiddlesticks! naught know I save the garbled lies that pass for rumor. What choice new villainy devises Nicholas Trott?"

"The Justice has lately been largely employed with the trials of the pirates," answered the Governor quietly.

"Pirates, pirates! I am weary of my life because of the pirates. Can any of you speak of aught beside? What of these whispers concerning the continued disaffection of the colonists toward their Lordships?"

"That there has been somewhat of disloyal talk, Madam, that do I not deny; that the temper at this present is of a more loyal nature, that affirm I right gratefully."

"You do but lull yourself in a fool's paradise, Governor, in which the serpent is Justice Trott. Doubtless they are more contented at this present, seeing that you have lately rid them of sea-thieves who jeopardized commerce, and for the time being, in gratitude to you, incline themselves presumably to their Lordships behests; but lookye, the bow too long bent will snap, be the archer never so skilful!"

"Nay, Madam, wise in all things that pertain to your sphere and in many things beside, past man's knowledge, we trust that in this you prove false prophet. We have every assurance that brighter days are dawning for our people, the energy and integrity of the best in the Province being entered thereupon."

“That for the energy and integrity of the best in the Province!” cried she, snapping her fingers contemptuously. “When such men as Trott and Rhett are hand in glove with their Lordships what can be achieved? When the Proprietors grossly neglect their responsibilities, turning a deaf ear to the cry of our necessities, can they maintain their authority over us? Is it at their costs that fortresses are built, wars with Indians carried on, pirates chased from the seas? Have we not provided for ourselves, to their eternal shame? Furthermore, Rhett is against you. ’Tis said that he plays in the dark as Trott’s ally. Proof enough have you of his temper toward you in recent events, and the heart of the people is hot against them. I am a woman, Governor, and such have a finer touch for feeling the pulse of the people than a man, when she concerns herself therewith; men reason too much and see too little. Certain letters have recently gone to London very compromising to Trott’s faith with the people. How do I know? That matters not; she who has once lived in courts keeps ever knowledge of the back stairs. Truly, I say unto you that a day cometh, and that speedily, when treachery shall walk un-cloaked!”

“Then, your Ladyship, say I unto you that should such a day come to pass we will meet treachery with loyalty, dishonor with honor. Yea, should a multitude fall away those that remain will be a host within themselves, seeing they be so strong with patriotism, and seeing they yield not their trusts but with their lives. As long as the King’s seal stands upon the charter of the Proprietors, so long will we protect

their rights, come what may, so help us heaven!" So spoke the staunch Governor in ringing tones, head uplifted, hand on his heart, a look of pure determination in the fine, brave face.

Despite herself, into the dark, cynical face of the indomitable old woman came a look of genuine admiration.

"'Pon my soul, Governor, you would almost persuade me to love virtue, though vice is wont to be the more alluring. God save the King!" she cried warmly.

"Amen!" ejaculated the Governor devoutly. "As also their Lordships."

"Save them from mischief!" she retorted.

"In not too comfortable a place!" added Damaris, breaking in for the first time.

"My daughter!" reproved the Governor.

"Out of the fullness of the heart, father," she answered undaunted.

"With the wisdom of serpents," added her Ladyship.

"All women are conspirators!" spoke the Governor with vexation.

"All men are blind!" retorted her Ladyship. "Forsooth, the eyes of the blind shall be opened some day," she spoke oracularly.

"Perchance, many pass for blind, Madam, who must shut their eyes in wisdom, or in hope fix them beyond the clouds!" sighed the Governor heavily. "But a truce to matters grave and serious. So my little maid has been earning your Ladyship's dis-

favor. May I know the offense?" he asked in lighter vein.

"Oh. Damaris," snapped my lady, ill-pleased to be put off like a child. "Damaris is a fool—not so strange neither, considering her parentage."

"Good English stock, your Ladyship," answered the Governor pleasantly, ignoring the rudeness of the thrust.

"One would think she came of frontier tradesmen and covenant maids. She vaunts the most underbred views of matrimony."

"Indeed, your Ladyship, you astonish me. I thought that she was betrothed and like to wed in the most approved fashion," replied the Governor gravely, with a tightening of the leonine lines in his face.

"'Deed, there is no counting upon you Johnsons. People with ideas can't be relied upon; there is no telling whether she will do it or not."

The Governor looked in astonishment at her Ladyship, then gravely at his daughter.

"There seems to be something that I do not understand, ladies," he spoke seriously.

"No more will you as long as Damaris is to be reckoned upon. These girls who ride ideals for hobby-horses seldom cross the bridge of common-sense!"

"Madam, I do not understand you. My daughter is betrothed, by her own choice, nor would I have her marry otherwise, whatever my inclinations. 'Tis presumed she chose for love, since no pressure was brought to bear upon her. A woman should know

her own mind. To promise is to hold with good women, but finding that she has chosen lightly, or deceived herself, 'twere better to break than to hold with a falsehood."

"Who talks of breaking? Oh, you vastly impossible Johnsons! I but spoke of a girl's passing coquetries, and coquetry is after all the atmosphere of beauty," spoke her Ladyship gaily; but to herself she was saying, "Plots and counterplots, here's one to be kept in the dark."

Ill-satisfied, the Governor looked from her sprightly Ladyship to his silent daughter. Both women smiled; that told him nothing, for the battery of smiles is impregnable.

"It would shame me to have my daughter act lightly; but 'twere the greater shame to have her wed unloving!" he spoke sternly.

"Daisies and ladslove, here's another Corydon!" interposed her Ladyship mockingly. "All the world's gone a-Maying, where's my crown of roses and the hem of my shepherd's smock?"

"I hope that you are not acting lightly, Damaris," said the Governor sternly, ignoring her Ladyship's badinage.

"Nay, she has chosen most weightily," again interposed Lady Kildare. "Mr. Yonge can never more be called slender, more grief to him, and the solidity of his fortune none can doubt. 'Tis a monstrous fine match."

"Have you chosen lightly, Damaris?" repeated the Governor sternly.

"Nay—" began again her Ladyship, but the Governor interrupted courteously:

"And it please your Ladyship, I would have my daughter answer, whatever the pain her answer bring me. Speak, girl; thou art not wont to be so slow of speech!"

Lady Kildare shot a consuming glance at him from under her knitted brows. There was silence in the room, even the buckled slipper lay quiet on its stool.

White and stern stood the Governor, commanding and inflexible of purpose, his arms folded upon his chest. Angry and indomitable sat the old lady; eagerly forward she leaned, her nervous hands clasped over her cane, the red deepening under the rouge, her piercing eyes burning their unholy and unalterable purpose into the mind of the girl. The girl herself standing there white and tremulous, shame and pain and pride rending her virgin heart, whose most sacred feelings were summoned to the bar. A girl with her youth of dreams and her heart of pain, required in one brief moment to untangle the web of cross-purposes and choose the straightest strand. Silent she stood, her downcast eyes following with feverish intentness a little mauve mouse that browsed emptily over the rose carnations on the rug.

The world with its selfish devices, humanity with its proven integrity, youth with its reckless inexperience contended there in the long, low room where the December roses smelled sweet in their India bowls, and outside in the magnolia a mocking-bird recalled

last spring's lovetime in rippling trills of plaintive sweetness.

To the girl two voices called, in each the blended voices of right and wrong; to choose the voice she loved meant to do the thing she loved, and with a woman's belief in the atoning power of self-immolation she closed her ears to it. To choose the other voice, to act as justice and duty dictated, were harder still, and because harder, more nearly right, she reasoned in galling self-reproach. Because her father loved her he would give her this chance at the cost of his pride, but she would not shame him. Hearts cannot ache forever, other women had gone through life with hearts grown dead through pain—why not she as well as another? Surely duty were greater than love. Youth is forgetful of the past, reckless of the future. She lifted her eyes, but they avoided the two anxious pairs fixed upon her.

"I have not chosen lightly," she spoke very quietly. "Mr. Yonge is content; for the rest I will be true to my word. How sweetly that bird counterfeits spring."

Lady Kildare's hands unclasped from her stick, falling limply to her side, while the stick clattered noisily away, frightening the little mauve mouse into its hole and silencing the mocking-bird's song.

"Fore the Lord Harry, that moment aged me a twelve-month; but the girl isn't a fool after all," she murmured to herself with a sigh of relief. Aloud she said: "Forsooth, 'tis not in the heart of a maid to withstand the beaux yeux of Francis Yonge. He is a most presentable gallant, of a fair wit and honey-tongued." Then she leaned back



wearily and applied herself languidly to her essence-bottle.

"I am glad that it is as you say," spoke the Governor quietly, his eyes still upon Damaris, who had turned to the window. "I was fearful of trouble."

"Oh, it takes you men to make tragedies of rose leaves. What a dismal place this world would be had you the coloring of it," answered Lady Kildare playfully.

"And what a simple place 'twould be without women to make our puzzles," he replied grimly.

"A most intolerably dull and outrageous world; man would not be long in going back to the beasts."

"True, very true, your Ladyship; we can't do without the ladies. They are our very troublesome pleasures and heavenly helpmeets. Daughter, can you not offer her Ladyship some of my last Madeira? 'Tis of a most excellent vintage; I would prize her opinion."

"Nay, Governor, you flatter me; and to think that impertinent Francis Yonge called my Madeira Teneriffe wine—'tis past the patience of a gentlewoman. I'll but taste of the wine and then away; meanwhile be so civil as to order my carriage."

The wine was pronounced of excellent flavor, mal-edications heaped anew upon Mr. Yonge, the unwonted favor of a visionary kiss brushed against Damaris's soft cheek, then with the great air of the grande dame, with rustling of perfumed silks, she was handed ceremoniously to her coach upon the Governor's arm.

At the gate stood Captain Maynard. Seeing him she ordered her coach to stop peremptorily.

"Fore the Lord Harry, Tomahawk, I took you for a ghost; you gave me quite a turn. Small wonder that redskins and pirates flee from your gloomy countenance. What are you doing here?" she asked querulously, drumming discontentedly upon the panel of the coach.

"And it please your Ladyship, I wait upon the Governor at his command."

"Will you be going into the wilderness soon?" she asked with eager interest.

"Nay, Madam, I fear I cannot so pleasure you, seeing the savages are inclined to peace at this present."

"Impudent coxcomb, your comings and goings concern me not!" she snapped, glancing sharply at him.

"Indeed, Madam, then I was mistaken. I thought that your words implied some interest," he replied imperturbably.

"The egotism of young men inclines them to think that the world attaches as great importance to their actions as they do themselves," retorted Lady Kildare witheringly.

"Indeed, your Ladyship, my actions are of small significance to myself or the world, therefore your interest surprised me the more."

"Fore the Lord Harry, a pox on the boy's impudence! I tell you they do not interest me," she cried irately.

"No," he answered courteously; "it seems that I flattered myself. I will bid your Ladyship good-morning, since the Governor and his daughter await me."

The words were soft, but they disarmed not her wrath; there was a look on his face that she did not like. She drew in her head and deigned no answer. "Robert Johnson is a fool," she muttered; "all good men are. He'll spoil all yet. I don't trust that young man; he is quiet. Quiet men are the Devil's own tools. I'm all in a pucker. I'm in for a megrim, an indigestion, and an attack of rheumatism. Deuce fly away with all lovers! I'm a be-ruffled old fool myself to try and substitute pawns on the board. Blood beats to the tune of the heart and you can't regulate a girl's fancies. I like that boy's face, he is a mettlesome lad. If he whined I wouldn't care. Nay, but I'll have my will, cost what it may, and hearts don't break like bean pods. 'Patience and shuffle the cards.' Youth holds a full hand, the loss of a trick more or less does not count; 'tis only when we are old and stake our all on the last trump—" She fell back among the cushions; all of a moment she looked old and shrivelled and gray, unconsciously her hands groped as though in blindness. "The last trump falls, the trick is lost, we pass into the darkness beyond, where some one else shuffles the cards."

## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE FEVER OF LIFE

“And wilt thou leave me thus?  
That hath loved thee so long?  
In wealth and woe among.  
And is thy heart so strong  
As for to leave me thus?  
Say nay! say nay!”

—*Thomas Wyatt.*

It was Yule-tide and a green one, albeit not the green Yule that makes a fat graveyard according to the proverb, for in the Province Yules come ever with flowers and foliage. Lady Kildare was entertaining a party at her plantation, with the wholesome, hearty hospitality born in old England. There was mirth in parlor and servants' hall, mirth in the clipped alleys of the garden, and mirth in the quarters.

The morn, while the stars still shone, the gentlemen had ridden away to the chase with winding of horns and the deep baying of hounds. Through the day the ladies had played at amusing themselves with ombre, tric-trac, slander and crewel work, and now that Lady Kildare and her gossips sat themselves down to their dish of tea and the last gleaning of gossip, Damaris slipped out into the garden. 'Twas a brave old garden, made after the fashion of Holland, with close-set hedges and shrubs cunningly

clipped into the semblance of impossible birds and beasts; beyond the terraces sloped down to the river, and here it was that nature had her own wild sweet way, little chidden, with the shrubs now out of flower.

Damaris sauntered idly between the box hedges, but they were too circumscribed for her. Next she strolled through the terraces down to the river. Here she seated herself, drawing deep breaths of relief. How good was the air of the open after the musk and ambergris of the warm rooms; how grateful the quiet after the chatter and gossip, the clicking of ivory needles and the shuffling of cards.

The solitude oppressed her, also the stillness and the motionless calm. She sprang to her feet and dashed down to the water's edge; there several boats tied to the landing rocked lightly at their moorings—one a canoe, another a caique, and several of heavier build. The longing for vigorous motion overcame her; she flung her scarf upon a bush, took some oars from the shed, unfastened the boat and pushed into the open.

A little later Captain Maynard rode into the stable yard; two lop-eared hounds, crestfallen, tails slinking, followed him. The Captain's humor was not of the best, the two culprits had led him upon a false scent away from his party. When he discovered it his companions were well away upon a warm trail, beyond the call of his horn, and woodsman as he was, he did not attempt to rejoin them; so out of love with himself and the chase, he had thrashed his dogs and ridden dejectedly homeward.

Passing from the stable to the house he saw an old negress nodding and dozing over her spinning in the sun before her cabin door; she rose as he passed, courtesying low, her turbaned head bobbing up and down, her black eyes rolling, her thick lips wide-drawn.

"He, he, he," she laughed; "massa better go down to de ribber; he, he, he."

"What do you mean?" asked Maynard.

"Don't mean nuttin'; he, he, he, pooty lil' red-bird fly low on de ribber bank."

Maynard was passing on, when something in her laughter made him turn.

"What sort of a red-bird, mammy?" he asked.

"Pooty lady-bird; lil' missy gone down dar, I seen 'em." Her eyes rolled and she nodded her head knowingly as she continued her chuckling laughter.

"What little missy?"

"He, he, he, 'pear lak he dunno; ain't I been see him a cotin' in de gardin. Sho' de big Gubnor's lil' missy git all de cotin'."

"Do you mean that Mistress Damaris is walking alone by the river?" he asked severely.

"Lord, how you kum kno' dat; I ain't say nuttin'," chuckled the negress, as the Captain threw a coin into her lap and strode off toward the river.

He searched the terraces, calling softly, but she did not answer; he walked along the river, calling louder.

A plague on the girl; it isn't possible that she is mad enough to walk in the forest alone!" he ejaculated impatiently.

Then he returned and skirted the river on the other side of the landing, calling and searching the ground for foot-prints, though indeed none might show on the polished carpet of needles and leaves. Reaching the landing again he spied her scarf across a shrub, then he noticed that the canoe was gone, and in the damp sand below he saw what made him leap down and kneel with horror, examining the earth fearfully. There were moccasined foot-prints leading to the water but not away from it. He drew a breath of agony and sprung into the caique, sending it out into the stream with swift, desperate strokes.

Which way should he turn? The blue sky purpling to sunset, the rippling waters and the brown levels of marshland gave no answer. Something guided him; he turned the boat up stream with steady, powerful strokes; now to right, now to left he plied, between his feet his rifle that he had kept with him, his eyes searching the waters and the shore and the fringes of tawny marshland. At last ahead of him he spied a boat; so far it was that it lay as a blur in the hazing distance, its occupant unrecognizable. He picked up his rifle with one hand, examining its priming with grim eyes, not losing a moment from the paddle with the other hand; then he shot forward again with renewed speed, teeth clenched, eyes hard, every muscle tense, a fear gripping his heart until the drops stood on his brow.

Then all at once a weakness overcame him; he sank to the bottom of the boat, his face buried in his hands. "Thank God, thank God!" he sobbed.

In the boat ahead of him his keen eyes had sighted Damaris and alone. She had pulled up stream against the tide, now she was drifting idly down. Closer she came. He saw the sunlight on her bright hair, windblown; the gleam of her scarlet bodice, heard the splash from the oars she had again taken up. She turned, and seeing him for the first time waved her hand lightly to him in greeting; and his heart, but now cold with dread, grew hot and hard against her.

"Will you never have done with your folly and recklessness?" he asked severely, his eyes flashing blue-black, his lips twitching as he brought his caique alongside of her.

"Gramercy, 'tis our great tragedian again," she laughed mockingly, throwing back her head with a proud little gesture peculiar to her; then straightway fell she a-rowing, her round white arms moving easily with the oars, the dimples coming and going as she slackened and tightened the muscles.

"Your recklessness passes reason!" he cried angrily.

"By my conscience, Indians again, I dare say," she drawled mockingly.

Maynard spoke not a word, though inward gnashing of teeth there was. With a skill peculiar to savages and himself, he transferred himself from the caique to her canoe, fastening his boat behind in angry silence.

"You are pleased to make yourself very much at home," she flashed.

He looked at her flushed cheeks and her shining eyes. The delicious excitement of the exercise



tingled in her veins, giving her a vivid new beauty; but he thought of the agony he had undergone and said not a word. The reaction had come now and he felt strangely limp. As she rowed vigorously he kept his eyes alert upon the banks—he had not accounted for his Indians yet.

“I have heard of guests waiting to be invited,” she said haughtily.

“I warn you to have done with your folly, Damaris. I am near to shaking you for your obstinate madness. Have you not been warned more than a thousand times never to go beyond ear-shot alone? Are you deaf to all tales that come from the wilderness; have you no understanding of its horrors?” He had not yet recovered his equilibrium, the bare thought of what might have been left him unnerved; he regarded her in the light of a wilful child. He had shaken her once when a slip of a girl; she had run through a strip of burning stubble, while fear stopped his breath.

“You are the most insolent, overbearing, boorish—”

“Pull hard to the left, quick, with all your might!” he ordered in a low voice, his eyes fixed upon the bank, where a tangle of bamboo brier matted about the hidden mouth of a stream.

Angered to the point of recklessness, blinded with rage, in sheer perversity she pulled hard to the right.

“Great God!” groaned Maynard. He sprang forward, wound himself about the girl, shielding her with his body. An arrow, swift-spined from the green tangle, passed through the sleeve of his coat.

The next moment, his body still before her, he lifted his rifle and fired into the cover.

"Useless," he muttered, "the skulking rascal is behind a tree. "Pull hard," he added, and this time she obeyed in fear and trembling, bending to it the excited energies of her strong, young body, while still he kneeled between her and the possible danger, his rifle ready.

Neither spoke again until they had reached the open water close to the landing; then she dropped her oars.

"Are you hurt?" she asked anxiously.

"No, the arrow scarcely grazed me."

"Perchance it were poisoned."

"Not at all likely." He drew out the arrow and flung it into the water.

"I would gladly draw out the venom with my lips," she urged.

"There is no occasion. Truly it is nothing." He spoke impatiently, but he sat so quiet and listless, neither moving nor speaking, that she became the more convinced of his hurt.

"You deceive me; you are suffering!" she cried nervously.

"No, I am but thanking God that what might have happened did not happen. I was in time, the rascal saw me—" He broke off, and as his eyes rested upon the golden head that might have suffered savage ruth, he bowed his head on his hands and groaned.

The girl shivered, then burying her face in her arms sobbed. Maynard clenched his hands and looked away.

After a time she grew quiet and lifted her head. Something shining behind the mist in her eyes startled and thrilled him in spite of the force with which he was binding himself, for he was a man and he loved her, and the meaning of right and wrong was fast growing blurred to his vision; that through which they had just passed seemed to have broken down all conventional bonds and put them upon the level of nature's law. As he had fought for her life, so he felt that he must fight for her love. They looked into each other's eyes and the revelation came anew.

"You saved me. You saved my life at the risk of your own. I—I always treat you as though I hated you—and yet—you know that I love you!" she cried out desperately at last.

He spoke no word; his eyes were fixed upon the farther shore.

"God forgive me, but I love you!" she pleaded.

"Can you love me and submit to the caresses of another?" he asked hoarsely.

"It is false!" she cried out hotly.

"'Twill not be always so."

For a little there was no word spoken, his eyes were fixed upon the river from whence they had come; hers upon the glowing sky, out of which the sun had slipped beyond the glooming forest, leaving the rest of the world to the greyness of undefined night. The twilight closed like a purple morning-glory about them, in the freshening wind the river looked like the ruffled plumage of a dove.

"Would God I were free!" she cried at last.

"Make yourself free; why hold to this mockery?"

"I cannot; thereunto have I pledged my word."

"Damaris, Damaris, sweetheart mine!" he urged, bending to her and pleading as a man pleads for his life when it is sweet, "break the false bonds that bind you—in such lie no virtue—and come to me. You can school your lips to a lie, your eyes to a smile, can you warrant that your heart beat to their measure? Nay, youth and love will be free. Come to me, beloved; so long have I waited for you."

The passionate cry went out to her heart and found its answer there. Her will grew as wax, her blood as water in her veins; through a space that seemed as eternity she bent with the weight of her love to his love. One moment more and in breathless awe his lips would have touched her lips, and the fullness of the wonder would have overwhelmed them past returning.

Suddenly she started back, white and trembling with fear.

"Don't, don't, I prithee!" she pleaded, warning him off with her hands. "Do not touch me, do not look at me! What have I done, what have I done?" she moaned miserably.

"You tell me in one breath that you love me, in the next you tell me not to touch you, not to look at you. What do you think I am made of?" he cried out strongly.

"Mine the fault, mine the madness; forget it and forget me, I pray you! In pity, forget me!"

"'Tis a woman who speaks of forgetting!" he cried bitterly.

"When it is her duty," she answered with a moan.

"I will never forget you, Damaris! How can I, knowing—"

"Truly you will forget me, truly you must."

"Never, while my blood runs red."

For a time she did not answer, and when she spoke at last it seemed that she had crossed over a great river, where he might not follow. Her brows were drawn over her sorrowful eyes, her small hands clenched in her lap, but her voice was steady and calm.

"Let us reason together a little, Martin, while there is yet time. Let us be brave nor give ourselves up to this madness. 'Tis I who have brought this misfortune upon us, therefore mine the greater burden. My case is indeed grievous without your reproaches. You have saved my life; help me to keep my word, for keep it I will, come good or come ill, as surely as I am my father's daughter."

"Ho, shipwrecked mariners, shall I swim to the rescue?" there came a voice from the landing. "Art hard on a bank?" asked Mr. Yonge gayly.

Captain Maynard took up his oars and brought the boat in to the shore.

"Oddsfish! two boats?" questioned Mr. Yonge. "In case the peace were broken, mayhap?"

"We had a trial; Mistress Damaris won," replied Maynard pleasantly. "You will escort Mistress Damaris. Do not wait for me, I will delay some time making fast."

Mr. Yonge offered his arm with a bow, Mistress Damaris took it somewhat wearily.

"I believe that I forgot to thank you," she said, turning to Maynard, who occupied himself with the

ropes. Her words were light, but there was in her eyes a look that he understood.

"Be it as you say," he answered even as lightly, and standing he watched them disappear, swallowed up in the blackness of the shadowy forest. Then he took up his rifle, walking stealthily up the bank to where the caique had been concealed in the mouth of the stream. Of Indians there was no sign save a slight parting of the bamboo vines. He struck a light and examined the trunk of the tree. At the tallness of a man's heart he found his bullet imbedded in the tree.

"It is an infernal pity," he said wrathfully. "Hell is too cool for the scoundrel."

He walked home by the house of the overseer, to warn him to have his scouts on the lookout; also to send notice to the captain of the district, for the Province was divided into the same, with an organized patrol, though indeed, in cases like the present, little could be accomplished on account of the sparsity of settlement in the well-nigh trackless forest. Then with slow steps and a heavy heart he walked home in the starlight, thinking of Damaris.

## CHAPTER XXV

### THE HEART OF THE FOREST

"And stand indebted over and above,  
In love and service to you evermore."

—*Merchant of Venice.*

"Is there any way to show such friendship?"

—*Much Ado About.*

Spring comes early to the coastlands of lower Carolina; the early days of February found the sap all a-glee bursting into emerald buds. Like thick white fingers the stiff twigs of the plum tree were thrusting through the leafless tracery of purple-brown vistas; peach blossoms wove pink webs across the bare brown limbs, shaming the unclad trees; maples, their fringes vivid with the glad new pulse-beat of nature, raised the ensign of spring against the soft blue of the sky; high up the "red bud" sunned its veils of rosy purple; and close to the teeming earth, matted and moss-bound, violets clustered in fragrant lairs.

A flaming tanager, daring and coquetting with its sober-colored mate, fluttered and darted from Yaupon to sassafras shrub; a dove crooned monotonously on the top of a tall dead pine; cooters sunned themselves luxuriously; parrakeets screamed as they flew heavily from limb to limb; a rabbit scuttled through the rustling dead-wood.

Along a forest road, sodden and puncheon built on the edge of the swamp, Captain Maynard rode slowly, his bridle slack upon the burnished neck of his tall chestnut hunter. It was a day for idleness, a day for dreamy loitering, and the Captain, woodsman that he was and keenly alive to nature and its moods, though always himself dominant, gave himself up to the listless grace of the day. He was returning from some mission to a friendly chief. There had been a question of a fugitive of blood being given up by one tribe to the family of the murdered in the other; the Governor had been appealed to, and Captain Maynard had been despatched to adjust the difficulty. With his consent his escort had left him some miles back, riding to the town at quickened pace, while he loitered in the budding forest.

Such missions to Indian chiefs were not unusual; indeed it were probable that the colonists and the savages, who were of a milder nature here than to the northward, might have lived upon terms of mutual friendship and protection had it not been in large part for the faults of the colonists themselves. As early as 1520 Lucas Vasquez de Ayllon had aroused in the hearts of the Indians the most implacable hatred by his treacherous carrying away of Florida Indians into captivity in New Spain.

Later Spanish and French, alike unscrupulous, had used the Indians as a means of venting their national and religious enmity against the English of Carolina, whom they regarded as interlopers upon the lands claimed by themselves, constantly inciting them to murder and pillage of the outlying settlements.



Furthermore, the injustice and greed of the English colonists themselves, their want of faith, and the introduction of rum, stirred up constant and revengeful hostilities.

Thinking in grave fashion of some troublesome matters that had come to his notice during his recent visit to the Indian village, Captain Maynard started suddenly when through the greening vista, just ahead of him, he spied a man who had ridden his horse close to the roadside and was leaning heavily against a young pine.

"Something wrong!" he exclaimed, dropping his hand lightly upon his holster. As he rode nearer the man did not move. In appearance he was a gentleman, well mounted. "By my soul, 'tis Mr. Francis Yonge keeping tryst with some Dryad," he said with relief. Aloud he called as he lightly rode up:

"Good-morrow, Mr. Yonge; comes she late to the tryst?"

"Nay, this time she has come too soon, and 'tis my head and not my heart she has struck, by the Lord Harry!" answered Mr. Yonge, with a sorry attempt at gaiety, pressing his forehead with a rueful smile. "And I swear I was a-bed with the fowls last night; I can't even console myself with the memory of over-night mirth. I supped upon porridge and milk and was wakened before the break of the morn by a shrill Scotch housewife beating her maid for sloth. Nay, but the Devil is in my head, I am thinking!" he ended dismally, while a contraction of pain set itself in agony on his face, that had grown of a sickly pallor, greenish and mottled.

Captain Maynard regarded him closely, then backed his horse some paces away with an exclamation of dismay.

"Well," asked Mr. Yonge faintly, "dost like the look of his majesty in my brain?"

"'Tis the small-pox!" spoke Maynard compassionately.

"Small-pox!" shouted Mr. Yonge; "small-pox! You jest, man; 'tis the disease of vermin."

"'Tis the disease of the stricken," replied the other gently.

"Small-pox! Faugh!" Mr. Yonge shook his ruffled hands with a gesture of disgust as though he would cast the horror from him. "Filthy pest! Hie you straitly away, Captain, and fortune grant you be not already endangered."

"And you?" asked the other.

"I, oh I? By my soul, I will lie here and rot in the forest. 'Tis long since the plague has been in the town, and God forbid that I should be the one to carry it. Never will Francis Yonge be the bearer of a pest. Damme, damme, damme, 'tis a filthy world! Tarry not, Captain; fly away to the town. I am become an outcast and a menace!" he spoke with extremest disgust.

"Whence have you brought the disease? I know of none hereabouts."

"How do I know?" asked Yonge irritably. "I do not ride abroad seeking such foulness." For a space he considered, then he cried: "Ah, like enough! Zounds, I have it! Some days ago, while riding near the plantation, I came upon a comely half-breed girl lounging before a cabin. I did but fillip her

under the chin and asked her what ailed her that she was vaporing like a woman of fashion. A pest upon women!"

"Meseems 'tis a pest upon you. Will you never have done with them?"

"Yes, in heaven," he answered lugubriously, and fell to pressing his brows.

Captain Maynard looked at him steadily for some moments; several moments more he spent flicking off the needles of a Turk-head pine with his whip.

"I know of a place where you may lie in safety," he spoke quietly at the end, turning his horse about. "Do you think that you could ride a mile or two back into the forest?"

"Not with you, I swear!" cried Francis Yonge resolutely, though he swayed in his saddle. "Ride to the town and leave me, I tell you; I'll have none of your company."

"Don't be a fool!" answered Maynard roughly; then he caught his companion's bridle rein, wheeled both horses about, rode backward some hundred paces, then turned sharply to the left through a trail, Mr. Yonge, now far spent with the sickness, remonstrating brokenly the while.

"I say 'tis madness, damnable madness; turn me loose!"

"Don't exhaust yourself with remonstrance; you have need of all of your strength. I am taking you to an old cabin I bought from a settler; I use it sometimes in hunting. You will lie there more comfortably than in the forest," replied Maynard firmly.

"There you will leave me!" urged the other.

"Nay, I have a mind to be a woodsman for a while; the air of the wilderness agrees well with my constitution," replied the other imperturbably.

"You are a reckless fool!" groaned Yonge.

"Better a fool than a knave," answered the other calmly.

"And wherefore either? Leave me alone with my loathsomeness," he begged. "Alone I will die or alone I will mend."

"Not so," said the other shortly, "you must put up with my company as best you may, for tarry with you I will, stand heaven to witness!"

"Of all fools you are the most infernal," said Yonge angrily. Then the fever of the illness increasing upon him, his head grew light and he began singing at the top of his voice:

" 'Si c'est un crime de l'aimer  
On n'en doit justement blâmer  
Que les beautés qui sont en elle.' "

Singing, he swayed unsteadily in his saddle. Maynard fell back, steadying him firmly with his arm, averting as well as he might his face from his plague-stricken comrade. Again Francis Yonge took up his chanson:

" 'La faute en est aux dieux  
Qui la firent si belle  
Et non pas a mes yeux.' "

And so at a snail's pace through the forest rode they, the shrill song, the meaningless laughter frightening the chattering squirrels and timid wood creatures back into their coverts; upon the face of one

man ghastly glee and the spotted flush of fever, upon the other the determined look of a man who knows and dares his duty.

To the cabin they came at last. A rude affair it was, such as were built by the first pioneers in the wilderness; in the corner a couch of deerskins, also a cupboard containing still a supply of simple food.

Captain Maynard half carried his comrade to the couch, then he opened the windows to let in the sweet air of the forest, and kindled upon the rough hearth a fire of brushwood to make the room dry and wholesome.

Through the tedious days that followed, albeit the sickness was of mild form, Maynard nursed his patient with untiring gentleness and patience. He doctored him with simples that he had learned in his camp life, fed him upon broth of Indian meal, and partridges that he shot with reluctance because of the mating time.

The day after their coming to the cabin a friendly Indian, whom Captain Maynard had once benefitted, came by while the latter was chopping wood and whistling briskly to himself. Seeing him the Indian gave a grunt of satisfaction and began to approach.

"Stay where you are, Little Crowfoot," called Maynard, adding the Indian name of small-pox. The redskin started to run; the Captain ordered him to stand, and he stood as though rooted to the spot, a statue of copper bronze, face impassive, eyes alert. "Little Crowfoot is a good Indian, good Indian the white man's friend; great white chief the friend of the Indian," said Maynard.

The Indian grunted gutturally, making signs of friendship and satisfaction.

"Little Crowfoot must go to the Governor and carry a message from his friend in the forest."

Again the Indian grunted and signified acquiescence.

"Go to the Governor, the great chief of all the pale faces and the great friend and protector of all friendly Indians; tell him that Captain Maynard sends greeting to his chief and says that he and his friend Mr. Francis Yonge are safe, but detained by affairs in the wilderness."

The Indian stood still, gazing imperturbably ahead of him.

"Off with you!" cried the Captain.

"Great chief, little redman; great chief, big word; little redman, little word. Great chief not much believe, little redman not much live."

"Precious of your skin are you, you rascal," laughed the Captain. "Little Crowfoot much wise man." Then he set him to thinking what was to be done. He could send no letter, fearing to send the disease therein; but some pledge he must send to insure the credibility of his messenger, his safety as well. He drew from his finger his signet ring and tossed it into a clear pool of the stream hard by; there he let it remain some minutes. The Indian, thinking it some spell or incantation, fastened his mystified eyes on the white man.

"Take the ring, Little Crowfoot; now it can do no harm. Give it to the Governor and all will be well."

The savage fished out the glittering bauble with fearful fingers. Something of the breath of the Great Spirit must cling to it, he thought, all of magic and mystery appealing to his child-like mind. "Good," he grunted, and was off through the trackless forest like an arrow sped swift from a bow.

"Come back to-morrow, Little Crowfoot," called the Captain after him.

"Good," grunted the Indian, and disappeared behind the tree boles with long, stealthy strides, one foot moving straight in front of the other.

Each day that followed he came to the other side of the stream, standing there in statuesque silence until hailed by the Captain. Sometimes he brought a basket of Indian meal, sometimes a gourd of milk, again a brace of wild fowl, a haunch of venison, or food for the horses. Each day the Captain threw into the stream a coin, each day the redskin fished it out in solemn silence, then disappeared like a shadow before the sun.

Maynard had built for himself a shelter of wattled boughs against the hut wall close to the door. Hard by the horses were staked close to a fire that warned off night prowlers. There he could hear the restless tossings and mutterings of his patient. Sometimes he talked of Damaris, of her eyes like the stars, and of her coldness of constitution, wherein she was like the Alps themselves; sometimes he maundered about Nelly and lillies and pomegranate flowers; again it was in broken snatches that he talked of a certain Jennie Cresset of Bath Town, than whose were eyes none blacker nor breasts whiter; of a Lady Geraldine he now and then spoke. He reminded her some-

times that she was exceeding fair and many and broad her acres, but that her wilful temper would ever be her undoing. Always, though, the wandering talk came back to Damaris with her laughter, her red lips and her sunny hair; he raved about being staked in the sun and plead with her to lay upon his burning lips her soft hands fresh and fragrant as rose leaves. Then it was that with hard-pressed lips Maynard gave him his cooling draught, then dashed out into the open, breathing hard and fast, breaking through the undergrowth about the clearing, frightening the skulking creatures back into their lairs.

To him was Damaris as the sun in the sky by day and the stars in the firmament by night, and so to him 'twas a passing marvel how one man's mind could hold more than one woman.

'Twas a right tedious waiting for the Captain, the inactivity galled his vigorous spirit. Within during the long hours his patient drowsed or lay in unwilling consciousness, while his guardian, not satisfied to pass beyond earshot, strode around the hut like a trapped beast or lay on the ground looking up through the tall pines that grew about it, and then was he the more content. The warm pulse of the earth that teemed with the energies of powers unborn quickened the red blood in his veins, freed him from the conventions of life, made him the full man for whom the round earth and the fullness thereof were but made for conquest; nothing seemed too great or too daring for his strong right arm thewed like the fleet deer.

Then he sprang up with a start. Along the warm earth he caught the scent of a red deer. Close



through the greyling thicket tracery, now sapping into green, he saw the full eyes, the head well set and keen, the antlers many-tined, of a goodly stag. He sighted with his two arms gun-wise; he dared not shoot, for his patient slept. The noble creature looked nor moved, then with head thrown back and nostrils wide, ran with the splendid motion of his tribe into the swamp beyond.

Other times grey foxes slunk stealthily along logs and coverts, and when he sat in the twilight the barking of wolves, the cries of catamounts, and the weird voices of night creatures came from the uneasy heart of the forest.

At last Francis Yonge sat with him in the warm sunshine before the cabin. Paler he was and more languid, but his face was unmarked, thanks to a cunning ointment of bear's grease and simples, the secret of which Maynard had learned from a Yamassee medicine-man. This, however, he knew not, and as he gazed at his shrunken wrists under his dingy ruffles he frowned in troubled wise.

About a tall maple there clambered a grape vine of the bigness of a man's body, near the ground forming a loop that served as a lounge. This Maynard cushioned with pine tufts and deerskins and here Yonge was wont to lie while the blood grew red again in his veins and the slack muscles tightened. There he lay dreamily watching his companion busying himself with chopping wood, polishing a horn or cooking their meals over the fire low-burned and glowing. One day as he swung himself idly in his hammock, and as he watched Maynard stir the mush and broil the venison steaks over the

coals, it came to him suddenly and as a shock that in spite of the injurious part he, Francis Yonge, had played him in the past, he had learned to love that strong man with brown face and keen blue eyes, his long arms and woman's deftness. Could he, would he marry the woman whom they both loved and who loved the man whom he loved, he sometimes wondered, as though speculating about another? There were other women; there was Lady Geraldine with her broad acres and her Juno-like form—she was not averse to him as her letters still averred. Nay, he would marry Damaris, marry her he would if a thousand devils and a thousand saints stood in the way! he cried, slapping his thigh. "Should the pulse of a man's red blood be stayed for a woman's pale whim?"

There were days when they held much converse together. Sometimes it happened that the Captain told of his life in the woods, of the wars with the Indians, of the customs and traditions of their tribes, of the war-dance, of the calumet, of the scourge of the small-pox among them, of the trading-girls who were bargained to other tribes as chattels, of their tribal fealty and implacable revenge. Then again the talk fell upon the great London across seas, and Mr. Yonge told of its fashions and its follies, of its extravagances and its vices sanctioned by the beau monde.

"There are many beautiful women there, and much given to affairs of gallantry, are there not?" questioned his hearer.

"Tolerable prettyish, though they be too greatly addicted to beauty's arts to please my palate. Faugh,

one ever tastes the rouge on their lips! Then, too, their passion for cards is such that they even neglect intrigue, much less love-making."

"I thought they were vastly fine," said his companion, with a sinking heart.

"Fine enough for those who love their fineness. As for me, I've grown passing weary of their airs and vapors. I'm not the man to love women who do hold it a disgrace to be fond of their husbands or consider it a fault to appear fond or be seen in public with them. And Lord, their prodigious extravagance; 'tis not to be borne! I have a few little costly virtues myself," laughed Mr. Yonge. "Heigho, I warrant after all that with them the happiest married man is the one whose wife is dead. There comes our dusky Mercury. I wonder what he is bringing us to-day?"

The days of convalescence were over, the last drop of poison had been burned from his blood in the pure sun-bright air. In the afternoon they were to return to the town, and always in the mind of Francis Yonge was one haunting question that he dared not ask, for doubts about his handsome countenance were ever with him, though a reasonable shame had withheld the question until this last. Maynard sat whittling a stock of hackberry into a staff, whistling as he worked; perhaps he too was thinking of to-morrow, though he gave no sign—as careless he appeared as the wood-pecker that was drumming on a dog-wood tree hard by.

Yonge gave a laugh that was scarcely merry, strolled a few paces with halting step toward the

stream that held a shadowed pool, then reseated himself impatiently.

"I warrant I am pocked like a London mud-lark," he hazarded at last, with a sorry affectation of indifference and in a voice that seemed scarcely his own.

"Beauty doesn't count for much in a man," answered Maynard, smiling grimly to himself. "'Tis the ready tongue that counts with the women."

The face of Francis Yonge had grown white and drawn, and he breathed hard.

"No dainty woman would marry a plague-pitted man!" he cried with disgust, throwing his open hands from him with loathing.

"Nay, friend Yonge," laughed Maynard, "disturb not yourself. Your complexion is as smooth as the chicken-shinned Duchesses of Versailles."

"The powers be praised!" ejaculated Francis Yonge fervently; then there was silence.

"I owe it all to you!" he said warmly, after a little.

"Nay, to the bear's grease," answered Maynard indifferently.

"I would have died had it not been for you. I can never thank you enough!"

"Thank your constitution. 'Tis a good one, despite the tricks you have played it."

"You did not catch the plague?"

"No."

"You were in full danger of doing so?"

"Mayhap."

"'Twas a deed of passing generosity!"

"Oddsfish, man, and you keep on with this I am like to wish that I had never fallen in with you!" He moved away and threw a pine cone at the unoffending wood-pecker tapping so loudly at nature's blind store-house.

"I saw bear tracks over in the swamp yonder this morning," he said when he reseated himself.

"Blessed be the bears, I am eternally grateful to them! Methinks I will change the ancestral greyhound on the family crest for a bear," answered Francis Yonge, stroking his smooth cheek with satisfaction.

"Were we not leaving this evening, I would be after him early to-morrow."

"Think you that we will certainly ride to the town this evening?" asked Francis Yonge. The longing for the old life was upon him to-day and a new restlessness.

"I see no reason to prevent. Little Crowfoot not failing us with our wardrobes, there's not a cloud to be seen." Captain Maynard rose, scanning the sky and the forest with practiced eye. "Faith, there comes the rascal at last. Ho, Little Crowfoot, put down your pack and wait, we have need of you. Now 'tis time for our bonfire." He took up an armful of lightwood sticks and went toward the cabin. Some he threw under it, some on the roof and some into the cracks.

"Must you burn it?" asked Yonge reluctantly. "Truth, I have acquired a fair affection for the shanty."

“Oddsfish, man, would you speed the plague by the first thieving redskin who skulked around?” He disappeared within, and in a few moments the flames burned redly there. Maynard came forging out in a volume of smoke. “’Twill make a right merry bon-fire,” he said cheerfully, wiping his eyes with the sleeve of his coat.

“I believe that you like to do it,” said Yonge reproachfully.

“Oh, I like it well enough. I like to do things, to feel that I can,” answered the other, watching the work of destruction with a glowing face.

“You are nothing better than a savage after all,” said Yonge. “From harrying beasts and savages you have grown like unto them that dwell in wigwams.”

“So,” said the other good-humoredly, “so ’tis a man who does and dares it does not much matter.” His eyes followed the scarlet flames as they licked through the roof and tongued upwards to the sky. “So ’tis a right pretty blaze; but now for our bath. Off with your clothes and in with them!”

With quick fingers he tore off his garments, throwing them into the flames, watching them shrivel and blacken with boyish glee. Mr. Yonge removed his in more leisurely fashion, giving a sigh as what had once been good cloth and fair linen were consumed, shivering a little as he looked down at his nude body. Last of all they flung in their wigs, ragged and uncurled, and stood with bare heads close-cropped. After all, a man of fashion is little more than another—shorn of his plumes.

"Now for water," cried Maynard, running lightly across and plunging into the pool. Again more leisurely his companion followed him. They scoured themselves with the fine sand of the stream; Yonge with shiverings and sighs and complainings, for all of rudeness was new to him, never before had he stood unclad in the open nor plunged into the running waters.

"Now for the fire," called Maynard, "else you will be taking a chill and spoiling your complexion!" He had laughed and floundered and puffed like a porpoise while his friend grumbled; it was a joy to him to feel the keen cut of the waters and send them back under his strong arms. He scrambled up the bank for the bundle of clothing which Little Crowfoot still guarded in phlegmatic silence, then crossed again to where Yonge stood drying his shivering body before the red flames of the crumbling hut.

Maynard untied the pack, swore roundly, then laughed as he sorted the garments into two piles. Into the one pile he put the garments of the more comfortable texture, and that he spread before his companion. It was a motley's dress, all orange and scarlet and blue, complete even to the cap, save the wand and bells—part probably of some nondescript pedler's pack bought at second-hand from a play-actor's wardrobe in England. In the other lot was a pair of silken trousers of some rose-colored stuff indifferently thick, once worn by some lady of the Harem perchance, and probable pirate spoil from Levantine merchantman. A duck sailor's blouse,

fairly adorned with bell buttons and cordings of scarlet, he took with the trousers for himself, and there were besides two pairs of raw-hide shoes, hob-nailed; two pair of Indigo woolen hose, and a woman's gypsy bonnet crowned with a wealth of pink roses, with neck-strings of grass-green taffety.

A purchaser of costumes for the first time, Little Crowfoot had indulged his fantastic taste with a savage's delight in color. Now he looked on, well pleased with his handiwork, almost a smile upon his saturnine countenance.

"I swear I will not wear them!" said Yonge with vexation.

"Just as you please. Mother-naked is the fashion of the wilderness, but I purpose to ride into town!"

"Fore the Lord Harry! I'll not wear a motley's habit. I'll be thinking and talking like a fool!" he raged.

"Garments fashion the man," mumbled Maynard. He was pulling on his rose-colored trousers with the draw-string in his mouth, then he looked down at himself and swore again. "You thieving scoundrel, what did you do with the money we gave you, that you bring us flimsy toggerly like this?"

"Much fine clothes, much fine money!" replied the savage, with a grunt of satisfaction. For the first time in his life he was enjoying part of the pleasures of a tiring woman, and he was well pleased.



Maynard drew on his sailor's blouse, which was a little chary of meeting the rose-colored trousers, and sat down to put on his shoes.

With a windy sigh Yonge picked up his parti-colored garments.

"I've a great mind to wring his damned neck!" he said irately.

"It isn't worth while or I would have done it long since," answered Maynard cheerfully as he laced up his hob-nailed shoes, his own vexation swallowed up in enjoyment of the wrath of the elegant Mr. Yonge.

With another volley of vigorous expletives, Yonge pulled on his motley jerkin. Some bells still clung to it and tinkled musically.

"Here, take a pull at the brandy; 'twill hearten you up and save you a chill." Maynard reached the bottle that had fallen from the pack. "Nay, but the scurvy redskin has left us but one paltry dram—drink."

Yonge put the bottle to his lips, tossed it up, made a grimace, and spat upon the ground.

"Raw Hollands, by the Lord Harry!"

"Where is the brandy I told you to bring?" thundered Maynard, turning wrathfully upon the savage.

Little Crowfoot, in whom some of the courage of the brandy still remained, lifted his closed fist to his mouth with a gesture as of draining a bottle.

"Great Sachem's fire-water, very much fine fire-water."

Maynard laughed and threw a charred ember at him.

“Go and catch the horses, you thieving scoundrel! He isn’t a bad one, after all, as far as redskins go, and we’ve taught them to cheat, I guess; and there is no gainsaying that he has served us faithfully when we were in sorry plight without him.”

Yonge, who finally had risen to the occasion, with his usual versatility and with the help of the raw Hollands perchance, broke a spray from a crab-apple that flowered hard by, held it in the fashion of a jester his wand, and striking an attitude declaimed in a shrill falsetto voice, dashing quick-tongued from his own improvised nonsense to the words of the master play-wright:

“Hail to the King’s fool,  
But greater than I  
Walk unbranded  
In the world’s school hard by,  
Singing tra-la-lal  
Singing tra-la-lal!”

he rattled gaily. Then another position he fell into and trolled:

“‘A fool, a fool! I met a fool in the forest;  
A motley fool, a miserable world!  
And I do live by food I met a fool;  
Who laid him down to bask him in the sun  
And rail on Lady Fortune in good terms,  
In good set terms and yet a motley fool.’”

“And you like not that, here is another; perhaps ’twill set better to your mind:

“‘Under the greenwood tree  
Who loves to lie with me  
And tune his merry throat  
Unto the sweet bird’s note.  
Come hither, come hither!’”

"A right good fool you make. Little Crowfoot is a genius. By my faith, 'tis truer than life; but a truce to your foolery, we must be off!"

"Faith, and your Ladyship has forgotten her bonnet," said the jester mincingly, tendering to him daintily the gaudy headdress.

"By the Lord, I'll set no such monstrosity upon my head!" cried the other scornfully.

"It is well, the great Captain acts wisely; he will be taken for a covenant servant, being close-cropped!" smirked Yonge.

Maynard walked over to a tree where he had stretched the skin of some small animal. With a few vigorous slashings and lacings he made of it a conical cap. He raised the despised gypsy bonnet on his toe and was about to send it to the warm heart of the smouldering fire when Little Crowfoot sprang forward and seized it.

"Very much fine bonnet; give Little Crowfoot, great Sachem?" he pleaded. Maynard turned off with a laugh.

The two mounted their horses. They were bare-backed, save for a deer skin and the reins thongs twisted by Little Crowfoot.

"Good!" said the savage, and he made the gestures of respect that are used by his tribe upon meeting the great sachems of others.

Looking back from where the trail turned into the forest they saw Little Crowfoot still standing there, a grotesque figure with the rose-crowned bonnet tied under his copper-colored chin, his greasy deer-skin coat and ragged trousers scarce reaching to his

knee, behind him the red-glow of the smouldering pile and the long plumes of smoke lifting skyward. Surely a fantastic enough henchman he was for the two harlequin cavaliers, who looked at each other and laughed heartily.

For long sat Francis Yonge looking at the ruins of the cabin and the grey arms of the smoke reaching up through the green pines. At the end he spoke, and his voice was deep with feeling:

"Truly, I have lived in the great London Town and in the gay Paris; I have housed in palaces and companied in courts, but I had need to dwell in a hut in the wilderness to learn what a true gentleman was." He held out his hand to his comrade, with a warm smile.

"Nonsense!" said his companion roughly, yet shaking the outstretched hand with kindly pressure. "We'll but call it quits." Then, touching his horse, he fell into a brisk canter.

"You will never allow me to speak my thanks!" said Yonge curtly, when he rode up beside him again. Maynard turned and the two men looked each other full in the face.

"Between us there is no question of thanks; 'tis the hazard of fortune, that is all," said Maynard quietly.

"Think you so?" answered Yonge even as quietly. "Mayhap the future will prove 'tis no hazard of chance; the dice of the gods are never thrown purposelessly."

"If you wish not to catch a chill you had best ride more briskly," answered Maynard.

"As you say," replied Francis Yonge. "The gods grant that we meet not friend nor foe!"

So riding and chatting in desultory fashion they came unto the town as the dusk closed into darkness, gaining therein the safety of their own homes without discovery, to the exceeding joy of the gallant Mr. Yonge, some time gentleman of fashion, now the King's jester.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### DISAPPOINTMENTS

"For nothing this wide universe I call,  
Save thou, my rose; in it thou art my all."

—*Shakespeare—Sonnet.*

With the opening of March it became evident that matters in the Province were fast drawing to a turbulent climax. The long-suffering colonists, seeing that they could obtain neither justice nor indulgence from across seas, began to take affairs in their own hands, and that right masterfully. For this dangerous disaffection the Proprietors had themselves only to thank, for the year 1719 had opened with flattering prospects of reconciliation and adjustment. The people, being still grateful to Governor Johnson for his courage and promptitude in destroying the pirates, had chosen to consider what he might recommend, and their ancient rancor was held somewhat in abeyance while they exerted themselves greatly to further their Lordships' pleasure, taking measures to force the payment of back rents and straining every local resource to meet the exigency of circumstance. But even at this critical period came an astonishing order from their Lordships, commanding the dissolving of the Assem-

bly and the election of a new one, according to ancient custom, in Charles Town.

The said communication repealed the tax upon articles of British manufacture, also the tax upon the Indian trade, thereby depriving the Colony of its slender revenues in the time of its greatest stress.

Furthermore, there were instituted sundry injurious limitations which irritated the people and aroused grave suspicion that Trott was playing them false.

Resentment had been growing against Trott, in whom were vested too great powers, and this now reaching a climax, many grave charges of corruption were brought against him, the more specific by Mr. Richard Allein, a prominent attorney lately associated with him in the trial of the pirates.

The Commoners approved of the charges against the Justice, who claimed that he could only be indicted by their Lordships, and therein he felt secure. Nevertheless, the Governor, Council, and many prominent citizens drew up a complaint against his maladministration, which was forthwith to be sent to their Lordships.

When the Governor received the fatal communication from their Lordships he was sorely tried. To inform the people of its contents would be to straightway undo that for which he had so greatly striven. Good faith to their Lordships required that the people should be informed, but regard for their interests demanded that it should be withheld.

With the courage of his convictions and that disinterested honesty that ever distinguished him, he

chose the latter course, knowing full well that should it come to a point with their Lordships he would be sacrificed.

The Council agreed with the Governor that it would be dangerous to make public the communication, while the Commons violently denied all rights of the Proprietors in the matter.

Indignation prevailed, hot debate ensued, message from house to house followed; also a conference of both, in which was made a memorable speech by Justice Trott, which afterwards redounded to his credit with the Proprietors. After serious deliberations it was determined to send an envoy to England explaining and justifying their position. Mr. Yonge was chosen as one well fitted for the position and gravely accepted the honor and the responsibility. So it chanced that upon the afternoon of an early day in March, 1719, Mr. Yonge betook himself straightway from the Council room to the Governor's mansion, there to seek his lady-love.

Mistress Damaris sat in the drawing-room, which she had transformed into a golden bower with a coach load of jessamine which she had newly gathered in the forest. She was presumably mending the Governor's ruffles, but the skilful hands lay idle in her lap, and her listless eyes looked unseeingly out of the window. She had grown graver in the last months, and when alone the laughter faded straightway from her eyes.

Still and heavy with perfume was the air about her, not the shifting of a shadow disturbed the fra-



grant silence where the flowers drowsed in golden languor.

"News, news, news!" cried Mr. Yonge, sweeping the floor with his plumed chapeau, then waving it gaily aloft.

"Their Lordships have been pleased to grant our requests and now stands a good ship in the offing bringing monies abundant for us!" cried Damaris excitedly.

"Nay, not so; news I said, not a miracle," answered Mr. Yonge dryly.

"Truth, such would be a miracle; but, prithee, tell me your news."

"News, news!" he repeatedly earnestly.

"And that?" she asked, looking up with eager eyes into his face, beneath the excitement of which there burned an unwonted purpose.

"The Council has decided that since all letters to their Lordships prove unavailing, they will forthwith send a special emissary over seas."

"And—" there was feverish eagerness in the girl's eyes.

"The choice hath fallen upon me!"

"Truly, right wisely chosen. Accept my congratulations upon this new honor," she said with a sigh of relief.

"And—" Mr. Yonge broke off; there was hesitation in his speech, but purpose undaunted in his eyes.

"Well?" questioned Damaris anxiously.

"So could matters not have befallen more fortuitously, Lady mine; so have they made the way

open for the journey that I have long wished to take with you. Certes you will go with me, beloved, so long have I wished and waited for you?" His voice entreated and he held out his arms beseechingly.

"No, no!" she cried affrightedly, shrinking away.

"And wherefore, may I ask?" he demanded sternly, as with arms folded upon his breast he now regarded her searchingly.

"Truly, it were impossible!" she cried resolutely.

"And why impossible? Will you be so kind as to explain?"

"I would be afraid—I dare not!" she cried desperately, while her eyes grew large with fear.

"Truly, your words are strange. Am I asking that which so greatly exceeds my prerogative? Do I not stand within my right as your betrothed husband? Have you not promised to marry me? Give you no thought to this? Is your word then but an idle thing?" he demanded hotly.

"My word is not an idle thing," she cried miserably. "And some day I will marry you," she ended with a sob in her throat.

"See, Mistress Damaris, tears are a woman's weapon, but they will not stay my purpose. That some day has been too long delayed. I am weary of postponement, I will no longer be lightly set aside!" He spoke very resolutely.

"I am in no haste to wed, I cannot leave my father. I will keep my promise in a time convenient for me!" she answered haughtily, while her eyes flashed.

"I will no longer be set aside. Have words of mine and love of mine no weight with you?" he pleaded.

"I am in no mood to wed," she answered quietly.

"There can be but one explanation of this," he said, coming nearer. He was reckless with pain and anger now. "You love another!"

"If so you think, so may you speedily release me!"

"So will I not; you have given your word!"

"Fear you not to wed me, thinking that I love another?"

"Marry you I will, stand heaven and hell against me! I love you, I hold your promise. For the rest—well, we will not speak more of that," he spoke bitterly.

"I have never promised to love you!"

"No!"

"Do you think me nearer loving you to-day than that other day?"

"No!"

"There are women more beautiful than I, women who might easily love you—why do you not throw my cold promise back to me as a hateful thing?" she pleaded.

"Why do I not release you of mine own free will?" he asked wrathfully. "So will I show you, so will I tell you, since you ask me!" Taking her arm he drew her across the room in front of a tall pier-glass. Trembling she stood there, overcome and subdued by his passion. "Look you," he said; "look at the woman who confronts you there!"

Mutely she obeyed, compelled thereto by something stronger than herself; but her eyes rested not on her own reflection but upon that of the man alive with purpose, splendid in courage, dauntless in love, whom she saw in a new and terrible light.

"Look you well," he said earnestly, "then ask me why I do not offer to release you. There may be women more beautiful than you, that I know not. Some women there may be who might easily love me. Some women have loved me, mayhap. Cause I have given them to rue their love, mayhap. Truly, I have never left them thirsty. That which I have willed, I have most often accomplished!" His eyes flashed, his voice rang with a reckless note of triumph that made the girl tremble in his strong grasp. Then Francis Yonge drew a deep breath.

"Look at yourself," he continued, with mingled fervency and bitterness. "Look at that little head crowned with its shining gold; day and night have I longed to draw it upon my bosom and hold it there till time and eternity shall have passed away. Look at that white brow, those flushed cheeks, those sweet red lips. Day upon day have I hungered to touch them, night following night have I covered them with kisses in dreams, nor sinned I in the dreaming, nor broke I law of God or man, seeing that you are my promised wife, seeing that some day we twain would be pronounced one flesh in the sight of God and man. Is there no warm blood in your veins to thrill to my love, no woman's nature in your lovely frame that it grows cold to my touch when it should yearn toward me? Your flesh is ice,

your arm lies as a snowflake in my hand, your eyes avoid mine; for love you give me fear, and yet come heaven or come hell I will hold you to your word because I love you. And now—" he said, pausing for breath and moistening his parched lips, while he drew her around and holding her at arm's length looked full into her face—"sweet, white little flower that fears me and trembles under the fervor of my love, you have drunk up my reason, tortured, dared and denied me, yet by all your bloodless saints I swear that this once will I kiss you once upon those same sweet red lips, then will I leave you before love of you drive me to some new madness!"

Mute, despairing, terrified stood the girl, her eyes suddenly opened to that which love means to a man. Unresisting, awed she stood, the room circling in waves of yellow blossoms about her, the heavy fragrance of the flowers overwhelming her senses.

Closer and closer Francis Yonge drew her to him, while she seemed as turned to stone on the rack of his love. The golden head lay on his bosom, he lifted the pale face to his own; the long lashes lay motionless above the violet shadows, not a heart-beat ruffled the lace against her bosom; she lay in his arms as though asleep.

"Sweetheart, sweetheart, forgive me; so must I once, else will I lose reason! You little white flower, how can you know how I have yearned for you, how longed to hold you thus—prayed for your lips even thus. Dream of my dream, life of my life," he murmured tenderly, then broke off with a cry of agony. "Great God, she has fainted!"

He gathered her into his arms and carried her to a couch by the open window, tears of shame falling upon her white unconscious face.

“Would God I had died ere I had hurt thee!”

## CHAPTER XXVII

### PATIENCE

"Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,  
But bears it out e'en to the edge of doom."

—*Shakespeare—Sonnet.*

Early in May Francis Yonge landed in London, the scene of his youthful triumphs and follies.

There he found the affairs of the Colony vastly involved, somewhat in disfavor, and by no means promising of a happy solution.

From the King, to whom they had made direct appeal, no satisfaction could be obtained, seeing that that careful monarch awaited such favorable time as the Proprietors might resign their rights so might he assume them to his own profit. The Proprietors themselves were neither diligent nor courteous, letting it rather be seen that they regarded the whole matter as an annoyance. The Palatine Lord Carteret, whose deputy Mr. Yonge was, busied himself in preparations for an important embassy to Sweden, the others being also equally engaged or disinclined.

It was weeks before a quorum could be procured, and when accomplished consisted for the greater part of proxies. To Mr. Yonge, who had come to London in all good faith to save the Proprietors from the consequences of their folly, if possible, such con-

duct was particularly irritating and ungracious. Nevertheless, he exercised himself diligently to obtain their good-will on behalf of the Colony, and give them a proper understanding of its circumstances, also of the critical condition of their authority.

After great perseverance and the patient submission to manifold slights he was finally permitted to lay the memorial of the Colony before them, together with the complaints against Justice Trott.

Pending their decision and during three months Mr. Yonge had ample leisure in London Town for all of its sights and its pleasures. He amused himself as best he might in the extravagant, picturesque beau monde, where fashion did not set a very high standard for its devotees, for, and did he do it in good form, a man could break most of the laws of the Decalogue in a day without shocking his associates or injuring his own reputation.

The great play actors whom he had applauded in his youth had forever passed behind the pasteboard scenes. The Brace girdle no longer played Angelica in "Love for Love," that lewd and witty comedy written for her by her lover, the brilliant and unscrupulous Congreve. My Lords Lovelace and Burleigh no longer ogled and languished in the audience, for with love and youth she had long since done.

The old kings and queens had laid aside their ermine and tinsel, but new stars had arisen above the footlights, and about the play-house doors in Drury Lane and Covent Garden powdered beaux still ogled the fine ladies passing to their chairs, link boys quarreled, flambeaux flared, the shrill cries of



the orange girls rose above the confusion where all the world of fashion, painted and patched and powdered, took its pleasures and license.

Some hours he passed in the Kit-Cat Club. Here in the old days, now seemingly far-passed, Steele and Addison had argued, Congreve conversed in his brilliant egotism, and Kneller had taken his leisure, besides the beaux and the wits of the day.

He dropped in at Will's Coffee House and the Bell and the Cock, disporting himself there after the manner of the gentlemen of the times. He went to the Exchange and to Spring Gardens, but he took his pleasures with a moderation and a decency that set his comrades a-titter over his priggishness.

He quarreled with Lady Geraldine, still unwed, at least three times a week over her tea table, made it up at the play, and quarreled again at the next rout. He lost gold at cards, ordered a wardrobe, and was as particular therein in the matter of tints and lacings and spriggings as the veriest fine lady herself. He refrained from going to Bath Town, out of deference for a certain white rose in the Province, as he did also from other fashionable pleasures for the same cause. And all the while, though courted and invited and fêted in the great town, though he would not own it even to himself, he was writing letters to Mistress Damaris Johnson and wishing 'twere himself in place of the letter that sailed on the next packet.

Meanwhile, the mission that lay so near to his heart prospered but ill. The Proprietors persisted in regarding the whole matter as an unwarrantable annoyance. Mr. Yonge would himself have been

removed from office were it not in deference to Lord Carteret, whose deputy he was. They disapproved of the complaints made against Trott, disregarded the petitions, and instituted various measures highly injurious to the Governor and his authority, casting at the same time certain ungrateful reflections upon his Excellency's conduct.

Hot in heart, vexed in spirit, and entrusted with certain sealed packets, Mr. Yonge was despatched back to the Colony. In the packet, duly delivered to Governor Johnson, he found an order commanding the breaking up of the present Council, forming in its stead a new one consisting of twelve men instead of seven, from the said Council, there being excluded Mr. Thomas Broughton, Mr. Alexander Skene and Mr. James Kinloch, the same having joined in complaints against Justice Trott. The packet contained also letters to his Excellency from their Lordships, written in terms of grave courtesy, but implying irritating reflections upon himself and his conduct in the Assembly.

The position of the Governor had now become difficult in the extreme. He must needs stem the tide of indignation against the Board, suffering in himself a measure of the odium aroused by them, experiencing the responsibilities of an aggravated authority while the real control was in the hands of Trott. However, he set himself to obey their instructions, though the Province regarded his course as madness, some of the members refusing to qualify.

The most grievous among the new acts was that which forbade the giving of lands to emigrants, their Lordships retaining for themselves this privilege.

Now colonization was the hope and safeguard of the Colony. Only by an increase of such a population could their borders be enlarged and strengthened and maintained against the Indians.

Never was colony more righteously indignant against its rulers. An ominous disaffection spread through the land. Matters could not so continue, and the wisest shook their heads in grave apprehension of what might be.

Unsuccessful in his political embassy, disappointed and sore, but looking forward eagerly to a certain compensation after long absence, Francis Yonge, in all the bravery of London fashion, hastened upon the first day of arrival to seek Mistress Damaris, though a certain recollection of the last scene between them made him somewhat anxious and ill at ease.

In the garden he found her. There he found also Captain Maynard, whom he straightway fell to regarding with some of his ancient rancor.

Not an exclamation of surprise, not a blush warmed her cheek as she rose to greet him. If she remembered, she chose to forget. Into his eager, ardent eyes she looked with gracious calm, laid a cool little hand into his for a moment, rallied him gaily upon the splendor of his garments and questioned him laughingly as to the broken hearts he had left behind him in London Town.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### A QUESTION OF HONOR

"Life is but to live with honor."

—*Calderon.*

"It was our honours drew us to this act,  
Not gain, and we will only work our pardons."

—*Beaumont and Fletcher.*

In further pursuance of proprietary instructions the new Assembly had been called in Charles Town, and here began the first organized opposition to the Proprietors. Trott and Rhett, once so influential in matter of elections, gnashed their teeth when they failed to incline one member to themselves, finding furthermore that in the present inflamed condition of the Province 'twas unsafe so much as to speak in the Proprietors' favor.

The Governor held his hand. For the present he found himself unable to move, since loyalty to the Board had brought into disfavor all that he might suggest. It was the course of wisdom, he deemed, not further to inflame the people by any unnecessary interference.

However, certain tidings reached him which forced him to call his Council together. War had broken out anew between England and Spain, and in furtherance thereof it was projected at Havana to

send out an attacking force against South Carolina and the Island of Providence.

When this information reached the Governor through authentic sources the Assembly had not yet convened. He called his Council and as many members possible of the newly-elected Assembly together in great haste that they might with him devise some means of defense, and since the treasury was empty the Governor proposed that the money should be raised by public subscription, making a gift of £500 himself.

Upon this the new members announced that such subscription was unnecessary, seeing the Duty Act would supply them. The Governor announced the repeal of that law. He received reply that orders were given to the Public Receiver to sue all who refused compliance. Justice Trott announced that should such cases come to his courts he would give verdict in favor of the defendant. Nothing was done at the meeting, the members preferring Spanish invasion to Proprietary legislation.

The Governor applied now to his military forces, determined that they should hold themselves in readiness. He summoned the field officers and delivered orders for a review, with arrangements for a rendezvous in case of invasion.

Governor Johnson put thus into the hands of the people the very opportunity that they wished for organization, and while the Governor was kept in strict ignorance thereof, with greatest zeal of activity the party was strengthened against the Proprietors, and at the meetings of the militia the prepared articles were signed. One Mr. Alexander Skene, a man

of ability, one who had held offices in Barbadoes, and one of the members dropped by the Board from the new Council, was zealous in the present undertaking.

The Governor had ridden out to his plantation, some five miles from the town, on the evening of November 27th, 1719. Upon the day following he received a letter signed by Mr. Skene, Colonel Logan and Major Blakeway, stating that the whole Province had signed an agreement to maintain their rights and throw off the tyrannical oppressions of the Proprietors. They also informed him therein of the great esteem in which he was held by the people; that a committee had been appointed to wait upon him, to acquaint his Honor with their resolutions, and to beg his Honor that he would hold the Government for the King until His Majesty's pleasure be known in the matter, seeing that there was no other man in the Province held in such general admiration and affection.

For themselves they added, "That we are of the opinion that your Honor may take the Government upon you, upon the offer of the people for the King, and represent the Proprietors; that rather than the whole country should be in confusion and want a Governing Power you held it for their Lordships, tho' you are obliged to comply with the people of the Province, who are unanimously of the opinion they will have no Proprietors' government."

The Governor flung the letter from him as though it were a viper.

"May the Lord forgive them!" he groaned. "And I have tried to live clean in the sight of all men!" He crossed to the window with a face set and white.

"Have my horse saddled, Pompey, and that within the minute!" he cried peremptorily.

In a time incredibly short he was covering the miles that lay between him and the Town as fast as his English-bred hunter could carry him. Reaching home he flung the bridle of his steaming animal to a groom and strode up the steps; there Damaris met him. She had heard the flying hoof-beats of the horse and rushed forth to greet him.

"Back so soon again, father? I had purposed to join you this morning."

"Something of grave import has recalled me."

"Is it pirates, or Indians, or a rising of the blacks?" she questioned breathlessly.

"Worse, a thousand times worse!"

"Tell me, father," she pleaded, hanging on to his arm.

"The people have risen and banded together against their rightful rulers. They purpose throwing off their lawful authority."

"Good!" cried the girl, with arms uplifted and eyes flashing.

"Merciful heaven, is mine own child attainted with this cursed treason!" groaned the Governor, turning away his face. "Then indeed it is not strange that this insult should be put upon me!"

"They dared not insult you, father!" flashed the girl indignantly.

"Even so; had the damnable impertinence to offer me a bribe."

"The cowards!" cried Damaris with passion. "Dared offer a bribe to a Johnson; to you, my father, who are the soul of honor! 'Tis unbelievable."

"They dared offer me the governorship, insolent rebels that they are, and I held it for them in the King's name. By the heavenly powers I will hold out against them; while I live, so help me heaven, I will have the courage to be a man!" The Governor lifted his troubled face and his hand to the sky.

"Father," said Damaris softly, the while she lifted his hand to her lips and kissed it; "father, my heart is not in the cause as you do know, but it is all with you, and by you will I stand with my last breath. Father, we will hold our honor against them, come what may!"

"Nay, thou art a loyal lass after all. Now must I be off to stem this insufferable treason, and I may."

He kissed her, passed gravely down the steps, mounted his fresh horse held by Sergeant McLeod, and with two grooms following rode quickly away.

One by one they gathered, breathless and grave, that new Council of twelve, and no word there was, save the passing of greetings among them. When they were all in their seats the Governor took his place upon the dais.

"Gentlemen," he said, speaking in troubled tones, "a great misfortune has come upon us, rebellion breeds in the land. To my ears the certain information thereof has but come within the two hours. Many of you here present are like to have known of it for some time. This is no sudden movement, no impetuous uprising—it is premeditated sedition and organized rebellion. There is black treachery in the land and I who hold their Lordships' authority am the last to know of the plot against them!"



"We do but maintain our rights against their tyranny!" spoke one.

"The King has long since signified by pertinent acts that he is not loth to reverse the charter!" spoke another.

"The people have been tried beyond their strength!" called a third.

"Tyranny brings its own punishment!" a fourth affirmed.

"So it would seem, gentlemen, that treason is become a virtue!" thundered the Governor.

"We do not hold it to be treason!" spoke one hotly. "There is not a man in the Province whose loyalty could be questioned. To the King we are true to a man, but we choose not longer to be governed by those to whom the government was given under certain conditions which they have not fulfilled, therein forfeiting their claims to our fealty!"

"As long as the charter so stands, every man of honor is bound!" replied the Governor warmly.

"Nay, your Excellency, not so; we were bound together by mutual obligation and interest. They have foresworn their obligations, heaped oppression upon us, and we owe them nothing, never having borne them love!"

"This is seditious language, gentlemen!" replied the Governor sternly.

"Nay, your Excellency, 'tis truth; but truth we dare not speak in public, seeing we hold office under their Lordships, and as long as such is the case we are bound in honor to uphold them. Whatever your Excellency sees fit in your wisdom there we will uphold you."

"This is a strange case, gentlemen, and scarcely consistent with the tenor of a letter I have received. In that letter I have received unwarranted insult."

"That passes belief, your Excellency!"

"None would dare insult your Excellency with impunity!"

"The honor of our Governor is beyond question!"

"Think you so, gentlemen, how consorts your good opinion with the following?" He opened the letter and read; when he had finished there was silence in the room.

"Becomes that your opinion of my honor, gentlemen?" he asked gravely.

"'Twas far from motive of insult, your Excellency. The committee but sought to conform to authority as nearly as they might, and regarding your Excellency as a man of fine parts and of integrity untainted, did desire to be led by you."

"'Tis a dastardly insult! Not all the sophistries in the world can wash it out nor whiten it one tittle!"

"'Tis an extreme view that your Excellency takes. That they have applied to you in this manner shows that they do desire to be reasonable in their actions."

"It is monstrous reasonable to offer a bribe to a man of honor!"

"'Twas a service they asked of you in good cause, your Honor, seeing that you had served so faithfully in one less righteous!"

"With them and their treasonable practices I will have no commerce. I stand for our Lords the Proprietors and their rights; for the rest I move not!"

"'Tis as well, your Honor, seeing that the committee has failed to wait upon you."

"Can nothing be done, gentlemen; nothing be devised to stamp out this rebellion?" asked the Governor earnestly.

"As to the rebellion, your Excellency, that has passed beyond our hands for this present. We can do nothing until the Assembly meets. Without its concurrence we are powerless."

"'Tis a corrupt land where treason walks unclad and unrebuked!" answered the Governor bitterly.

Then with mutual consent the party broke up to wait until the times were riper for action.

As the Governor walked forth to mount his horse he found Lady Kildare in her coach drawn up beside the pavement. She was chuckling malevolently and stayed him with her threatening finger.

"So, your Excellency, the eyes of the blind have been opened at last!" she spoke triumphantly.

"'Tis a questionable benefit to have one's eyes opened to the iniquities of one's fellow-citizens," replied the Governor sadly, and would have passed on with a bow.

"Nay, Governor, not so fast and not so hot-foot after rebellion. Small fear of its running away from you, 'tis a pleasant visitor that has come to tarry in the Province."

"Your Ladyship is pleased to jest," replied the Governor gravely.

"Gramercy, it is a right pretty jest," cackled her Ladyship. One is set on a hill top with his head in the clouds and suddenly he wakes and weeps, finding dirt under his feet."

" 'Tis a very sober matter, Madam; one that calls for grave efforts."

"Fore the Lord Harry, 'tis a very joyful matter! I have a new cask of Madeira, your Excellency; 'tis of the best. I prithee come with me and we'll drink the King's health."

"I will drink with your Ladyship to the health of our worshipful masters the Lords Proprietors of the Province of South Carolina!" his Excellency made answer.

"Beshrew me, you will not!" snapped her Ladyship. "Before I drink such iniquitous draught my wine shall sour on its lees. The powers be praised that I have lived to see the mighty fallen in the overthrow of that arrogant winebibber and libertine, George Carteret!"

"You do speak most treasonable matter, your Ladyship," answered the Governor, growing impatient.

"Truth passes ever for treason in a world made of lies!" replied her Ladyship.

"Treason is born of the Devil!" answered the Governor hotly.

"So are most of the pleasures of life. Well, good-morning, your Excellency, and a fair good-day to you. Faith, I am grieved that you will not drink of my wine in such fair cause. Fore the Lord Harry, 'tis the good men who have to be made over before they are wise enough to traffic with the children of men!" Smiling wickedly, plumes nodding, jewels flashing, she rolled away. "There are many who will drink of my wine, your Excellency!" she called back.

“ ’Tis a mad land!” exclaimed the Governor, sighing deeply. “ ’Tis far from good old England. ’Tis true, as my daughter says, that a new race is breeding here.” He mounted his horse with another sigh and rode slowly homeward, and none who saw their Governor pass with head erect recked of the shame that was gnawing at his heart.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### STEADFAST TO THE END

"Earthly honors flow and waste,  
Time alone doth change and last."

—*John Ford.*

When the Assembly finally convened upon December 10, 1719, there was general disaffection and lack of harmony.

The Governor sent his usual message to the House signifying his readiness to meet them, whereupon the House refused to meet the Council, the Speaker, Mr. Middleton, delivering an address in which he stated that all recent measures instituted by their Lordships were illegal and not to be considered by the Province. That they held themselves no longer to be an Assembly subject to their Lordships' unjust restrictions, the said Lordships having forfeited their rights upon them, but as a convention, acting for the people, and prayed that his Excellency Governor Johnson would continue to hold the reins of government until such time as His Majesty should be heard from. This startling declaration caused universal consternation. The way of wisdom was not clear. Some were full of advices for a stern course, others equally decided for mild measures; among the latter the worshipful Justice who had contributed so greatly to this catastrophe.

The Governor was greatly wroth over the proposal which the so-called convention had made to him in all good faith and affection, though he held it as an affront to his honor. When further entreated he sprang to his feet and cried vehemently:

"Nay, gentlemen, by my oath, I will shake off this generation of traitors as a grape its unripe fruit!"

"We are not traitors, your Excellency! Should the people ever endure the tyranny of the oppressors?" asked one.

"When a man comes to the point of reviling his benefactors the heavens are not clean in his sight!" maintained the Governor.

"They have given us neither protection nor assistance," said one. "They have ground us beneath oppression's heel."

"Should an honorable man utter treachery and fill his nostrils with the breath of asses?" demanded the Governor.

"All being said, your Excellency, that savors of wisdom, it comes to this, that considering the straits in which we are placed, the Spaniards being upon us furthermore, it were expedient to comply with the demands of the people," urged another.

"Will your Excellency hold his hands and look on while the Dons ravage our land?" pleaded still another.

"We do beseech your Honor to be favorable in this matter, seeing that you have great hold upon the confidence and affection of the people."

"Out of an unclean thing can you bring forth a clean one? No, gentlemen, a thousand times no, I say unto you! The swine will smell of its wallow,

call we it a horse never so bravely. If we band ourselves together disloyally, be the cause never so righteous, so will evil follow as surely as stubble is consumed in fire!"

And so maintained the Governor right nobly his cause against those who would have persuaded him to their will, and in the end rose he and gave answer to the committee finally and in full.

There was silence in the crowded hall, silence and tense suspense when he arose. All eyes were fixed upon his commanding figure, and upon his white face pain-worn, but the dauntless eyes quailed not as he met their look, the while in a proud, resolute voice, that rang through the hall, he refused and defied them, yet withal there was perfect courtesy and exceeding dignity. When he had finished there was silence, bowed heads and sorrowful countenances.

"Gentlemen," the Assembly is adjourned," spoke the Governor gravely. Then they went out silently one by one, by twos and threes, their hearts big with sorrow because they had lost the countenance and leadership of an honorable man, than whom was none in the Province so greatly esteemed. In the afternoon the determined Governor sent forth his proclamation declaring the Assembly dissolved; but the convention, equally determined, and in all recklessness, overcame the marshal, tearing the document from his hand and destroying it in the presence of the people, and issuing upon the same afternoon a proclamation of their own framing confirming all civil and military officers in their positions until further hearing.



And now, being satisfied that Governor Johnson would withstand them, they chose for their Governor Colonel James Moore, commander-in-chief of the late Indian wars. Upon Monday, December 21, it was noised abroad that the convention would proclaim its Governor in the King's name, whereupon Governor Johnson summoned his Council to meet him, which they declined to do, holding it the part of wisdom to resist no further what was indeed too strong for them.

Previously the Governor had ordered Colonel Parris to hold a review of the town companies upon the same day, feeling that he could rely upon this officer to assist him in operations against the Spaniards if need be. However, when he learned that the convention was eager for opportunities to meet the body of the people, he countermanded the order.

Now indeed was his Honor greatly wroth upon the 21st day of December. His Council had refused to meet, besides which, despite his peremptory orders, everywhere about the town drums beat, flags flew, uniforms shone, giving to the place an air of military parade and festivity. Upon the forts and upon the ships in the harbor the King's colors were raised, and this display he learned, to his indignation, was in honor of the new Governor now straightway to be proclaimed with rejoicings and acclamations of the people.

"Damme, upon the oath of a gentleman this is the most treasonable madness!" cried the Governor, riding hard to the square, where Colonel Parris had drawn up his troops, brave in the King's scarlet. "Damn the turbulent knaves!"

"Ho, sirrah," he called to Colonel Parris, "how dare you disobey my orders, expressly given?"

"I take my orders from the convention," answered Colonel Parris insolently.

The Governor, white with anger, struck spurs to his horse and dashed forward.

"Present arms!" called Colonel Parris. "I warn you to advance at your peril!"

Intrepidly the Governor rode up, sword drawn, eyes flashing, close to the bristling weapons. As he rode he looked around, thinking that some would make haste to join him, but in vain; the angry, resolute mob, that was armed almost to a man, stirred not. Trott and Rhett moved back through the crowd. Mr. Lloyd, the only member of the Council not armed, drew up beside him, and he was but an envoy of the convention to hold a check upon the Governor.

There was a breathless pause. Over the little town, with its clustered roofs and goodly gardens, the mild December sun was shining with the warmth of springtime; from fort and wall flaunted the King's colors; somewhere in the distance a cornet was playing a march of triumph; from balcony and window leaned women in festal robes; in the square, close-packed, shoulder to shoulder, crowded resolute men; horses neighed, swords clanked, men breathed hard.

The members of the convention now appeared. They saluted the Governor respectfully as they passed, then, falling in ahead of the militia, they took their places. A bugle-call gave the signal, the troops moved. Reviewing his lost cause the Governor sat

in dignified silence. Company by company they passed, saluting him, then moving on at their officers' commands to the fort, where James Moore was straightway to be proclaimed Governor of the Province of South Carolina with due formality.

The last man had passed from the square, the last drum beat had deadened into the distance, still sat the Governor there motionless upon his coal-black horse. At last, like a man in a dream, his proud head uplifted, his grave eyes unseeing, he rode through the deserted streets to his home, to all appearance the only man in the Province loyal to their Lordships.

## CHAPTER XXX

### THE METTLE OF STEEL

"I must be cruel only to be kind."

—*Hamlet.*

A ship bound from London to New Providence called at Charles Town in passing. Among her passengers was an English gentleman, a friend of Mr. Yonge, who would try his fortunes among the island plantations.

Mr. Yonge had supped on board with his friend, and the two, recalling old pleasures and reviewing past adventures over mellow Burgundy, had sat until past the midnight hour, when Francis Yonge was rowed ashore, the ship setting sail with the tide that flooded shortly after.

The streets were narrow and dark and ill-lighted, but Francis Yonge stepped jauntily along humming softly the air of a little French chanson. After a little he noticed a figure that slipped out of a by-way and moved haltingly ahead of him. In the darkness he could not judge of the character of the night-stroller, but instinctively his hand sought his sword side.

Directly the walker paused and slipped into the shadow of an arched way. Francis Yonge slack-

ened not in his gait nor ceased his singing, but his right hand clenched firmly over his sword hilt.

Out of the gloom there suddenly sprang and confronted him a slender figure.

"Nelly!" he cried out in amazement.

"And why not?" asked the girl, laughing lightly.

"Nelly, Nelly, this is no place for you!"

"And why not?" asked the girl again, this time with defiance.

"You are too young and too beautiful to wander alone in the night; harm might befall you," he answered gravely.

"What harm?" she asked recklessly.

"Harm that I care not to think of," he replied sternly.

"What does it matter what comes to me?" she returned bitterly.

"It matters greatly."

"Nobody cares."

"I care."

"As much as that," she cried, snapping her fingers in his face.

"You are jesting. Promise me not to do this again."

"Why should I promise?" she asked, suddenly melting and pressing her light weight against his shoulder as she moved slowly beside him, her glowing face lifted to him.

"Because you are a woman, and because you should not lightly risk that which is a woman's wealth," he answered as soberly as he could, while the girl's passionate eyes sought his.

"If it is wealth," she spoke in a passionate whisper, "why do you not take it?"

"Because I have no right to it, my child, though there are others who have and want it." Yonge spoke soberly enough, but it was night and starlight and the girl's warm fingers clasping his arm thrilled him in spite of himself, and a devil within mocked his coldness.

"Men call me beautiful," pleaded the girl.

"So therefore you should not wander like this."

"And I could love, oh! I could love as men never dream!" She flung out her arms with a gesture half fierce, half child-like.

"So you could, Nelly, and so you should give up this careless life and marry Ned Raff," he urged, alluding to the young sailor who had regarded him so malevolently upon the night when Nelly had danced the "Lillies of Castile" in the tavern.

"Ned Raff!" she cried scornfully. "Dirt of the earth and brine of the deep; sooner would I run my dagger through his heart."

"Nay, Nelly, be reasonable. Raff loves you and would do anything in the world for your sake."

"And so would I do anything in the world to put him out of this world!" she cried, clenching her small hands and stamping angrily.

"Then choose another, Nelly; there are more than one."

"And suppose that I did—you—you—what would you do?" She spoke hesitatingly and let her hot face droop against his shoulder.

"I would wish you happiness and give you a purse of gold for your wedding portion," he answered steadily.

"A curse upon your gold!" she cried angrily, starting from him.

"Then what do you want?" he asked soothingly.

She had stopped where a creaking lantern swung above a closed tavern door. Its yellow light was flung full upon her face as she leaned against the wall, eyes shining, lips trembling, her lithe young body quivering even as that of a mating doe.

"Then what would you have, Nelly—shall it be a necklace, or earrings with jewels in them as bright as your own bonny eyes?" asked Yonge lightly, all the man in his soul rising up to shield this child of chance from her passion.

"I would have not your gold nor your jewels. I would have what a man gives to her—"

"Nay, Nelly, you do but jest to try me. Know you not that I am affianced to a lady of this town and so must not play with such things?"

"You do not love her!" she cried out fiercely, and her hand sought her bosom. "There was a time when your eyes looked into mine with a meaning which a woman can—"

"Forget that time, Nelly," he interrupted quickly. "It would have worked you evil. Forget it and forget me. Leave the old life; there is yet time to save yourself."

"If I do not care to be saved?" she demanded recklessly.

"Then others must help you."

"I will have nothing from you."

"I am sorry, but you will think better."

For some moments she stood, moving her foot restlessly and playing with the dagger in her bodice.

"You do not love that other?" she asked suddenly, and there was desperate anguish in her white face as she waited.

"Yes, I love her, Nelly," he spoke gently. "But we will not speak of her, if you please. 'Tis of yourself I wish to speak."

The girl drew a long breath, then she threw back her head and laughed.

"I am Spanish Nelly; I dance the 'Lillies of Castile' in the tavern for gold." She threw herself into a graceful pose and beat time softly with her hand while her body swayed languorously. "To jest with me is to live." Again she laughed mockingly.

"Come, Nelly, I will see you to your lodgings. To-morrow we shall have forgotten your jest."

"Yes," answered Nelly, lifting her head proudly with sudden Castilian grace, "I did but jest; to-morrow the remembrance of it will have passed away as the dew of the evening." And she moved swiftly forward.

Something in her sudden pride touched him more than had her passionate abandonment, and in sorrowful silence he walked beside her, lamenting the evil he had carelessly wrought. Once or twice he glanced sharply about him; it seemed that there came to him the sound of stealthy footsteps somewhere. Suddenly, out of the yawning gloom of an alley, sprang four figures, swords drawn.



"Back, girl, back!" he cried, pushing her behind him into a doorway and standing at guard, sword ready.

Right stoutly they fell upon him. It was warm work to defend himself, good swordsman though he was. Not a word, not an exclamation; the clashing of metal, the swishing of naked blades cleaving the air, the long-drawn breath of men full-taxed as the fight waxed hotter. Francis Yonge held his own full well, but after all there were four to one, and he at sore disadvantage because of the girl behind him, for ever and anon, like a young tigress, she sprang out with her flashing dagger, and then he covered her but the more hardly. There was small hope of the outcome, but he meant to sell his life dear.

Heavily breathed Francis Yonge, nigh spent was he; somewhere his flesh was seared as with fire and warm drops fell, but he braced himself fiercely as there flashed into his mind the rumor that would come to Mistress Damaris on the morrow, of his having been killed in a brawl over a tavern girl. In one of his assailants he recognized Raff, and so he knew how the story must run.

Yes, he must fight it out. Fight—fight—fight—his brain formed the word monotonously as his arm swung out more and more feebly. Again a blade touched him somewhere; he felt himself wavering; then Nelly's arms wound close about him, lifting the sword and steadying it.

Another cry, a rush from somewhere in the front, and a man stood beside him. It was Captain Maynard.

With straining force Francis Yonge braced himself for one more struggle. Strongly the two swords played in tense silence. At their feet fell a man. A second reeled uncertainly away. Another moment and a third threw up his arm, his sword falling noisily. His companion threw an arm about him and quickly they disappeared into the darkness.

"My life is yours a second time," said Yonge hoarsely as he sank on the steps, leaning heavily on his sword. Nelly stood upright above him, eyes flashing, hands clenched.

"Cowards, cowards!" she cried furiously. "Four to one. I could tear out their hearts with my hands!"

"This villain will never again trouble the public peace," said Maynard quietly, as he ignored Yonge's speech and turned the man over.

Yonge examined the face anxiously in the starlight and gave a sigh of relief.

"I have not the pleasure of his acquaintance."

Nelly looked incredulous, and stooping examined for herself, then she passed over to the other

"His is but a blow on the head; it will soon pass," said Maynard.

"He also is a stranger," said Nelly disappointedly. "But the others?"

"All of them strangers, I fancy," said Yonge indifferently. "Half-drunken seamen from some vessel that sails with the tide. Well, we are pleased to close their acquaintance and will not try further conclusions this evening."

"Why, then, should they have set upon you, having no quarrel?" asked Nelly eagerly, while Maynard looked away.

"Who can tell, child? The Devil has many play-things," answered Yonge nonchalantly. "I think we were wiser to go elsewhere—the knaves are not a fair and cleanly sight."

He stumbled as he rose. Nelly was beside him in a flash, her arms about him.

"Blood!" she cried, holding up her fingers in anguish. "He is wounded!"

"Nay, not so. 'Tis but a little blood-letting for my health's sake," he answered coolly. "A bath and fresh linen will make of me a new man."

"Do you not see that he is hurt?" cried Nelly sharply to Maynard. "A curse upon your hands and wits!" Her two arms were about him, her tears fell fast as he wavered weakly. "See, he will die!"

"Nay, 'tis but a passing weakness, Nelly. "Do not give yourself womanish alarms," said Francis Yonge bravely.

In grim silence Maynard pushed the girl aside and almost carried him as far as her lodgings.

"Bring him in, we will dress his wounds!" commanded Nelly.

"Not so, Nelly. I am in no condition to enter a lady's bower. Good-night and pleasant dreams. You are a brave little comrade, Nelly, and to-morrow we will have forgotten all about this troublesome evening." He lifted her hand to his lips. The girl trembled and pressed her hand to her breast.

"Good-night," she answered bravely, "I have forgotten already."

A few steps farther Francis Yonge stumbled on, then he slipped as water to the ground.

"I am afraid that the rascals have done for me this time," he sighed.

"Not so bad as all that," answered Maynard cheerfully. "See here, guard," he called to one coming with a lantern.

An hour later Francis Yonge opened his eyes in his own room. A candle burned low by his bed and Captain Maynard sat beside him.

"Is it very bad?" he asked, touching his side.

"A little more and all would have been said," replied Maynard quietly.

"You came in the very nick of time." He stretched out his arm stiffly over the coverlet.

"Will you never have done with the women. A pretty tale this to come to her ears!" said Maynard sharply, disregarding meanwhile the outstretched hand. "The leader was Raff, the girl's lover, so the encounter is right unsavory."

"Nay, by my oath, you do me wrong," said Yonge with dignity.

"You do yourself wrong," returned the other impatiently.

For a time Francis Yonge was silent while he stirred restlessly under the covers. The candle burned lower; Maynard moved over to the window.

"Captain Maynard," spoke Yonge at last, with a short laugh, "it seems that I must ever unbosom myself to you as to my confessor. You do Nelly wrong. It was by chance that we met. Whatever I may have inspired in the poor child in a careless moment has gone no farther. Even then I did entreat her to marry Raff and give up her reckless life. Nelly is but an ignorant child who has missed

what a woman most needs, and so God help her!" he ended gravely.

"I beg your pardon," said Maynard heartily, coming over with outstretched hand; "I did you wrong—I am sorry. As for the girl," his voice grew gentler, "there is a special law of forgiveness for such."

"Thank you," said Yonge gratefully. "There are always thanks from me to you. Why did you save my life? You might easily have stepped aside."

For a long time he watched the flickering shadow of the candle on the wall before the answer came.

"I do not know," answered Maynard at last, wearily.

"With my death certain knots would be cut," suggested Yonge slowly.

"I would not have them cut that way," replied Maynard gravely.

"Is it—is it because we are friends?" asked Yonge eagerly, his face flushed, his eyes strangely bright.

"I think so," returned Maynard gruffly, resting his hand upon that of the other. "Man and man we have stood together, man and man we will stand to the end. But you must not talk more; you have lost enough blood to kill a better man."

"So I have—there must be fate in it all. By my faith, I believe the Devil is dead and his deeds will soon follow." He laughed softly, drew a deep breath, then closed his eyes.

## CHAPTER XXXI

### THE SUM OF LIFE

"The noblest fortitude is still to bear  
Accumulated ills and never faint."

—*Terentius.*

"Both the wonder and the story  
Shall be yours and eke the glory."

—*Fletcher.*

Upon the afternoon of the memorable 21st day of December in the year of our Lord 1719, in the Proprietary Province of South Carolina, the convention, after leaving the fort, proceeded to elect a Council of twelve, of whom Sir Hovenden Walker was chosen president. It also assumed the authority of appointing and confirming all officers. Nicholas Trott was forthwith removed from the Chief Justiceship, Mr. Richard Allein elected in his stead. The only officers who were permitted to retain their positions were Francis Yonge and Colonel Rhett, and those only inasmuch as the said offices related to private revenues.

Colonel John Barnwell was elected as a delegate to go to London straightway to submit the matter to the King. The convention published a lengthy article maintaining their rights and justifying their position, whereupon Governor Johnson, seeing that further resistance was vain, secured the public

records and wrote a statement of the matter to the Lords Proprietors.

Shortly thereafter advices came that a fleet was actually fitted out at Havana, in readiness to attack Carolina. Then the Governor, with exceeding magnanimity and generosity of character, forgetting his own private indignities and humiliations, did essay right seriously and appeal most urgently to the convention, asking to be allowed to continue in office until this present war should be ended, inasmuch as he found himself strongly bound to defend the Province until he should be released of his office from London, ending his appeal with the words: "If my reasons have not weight with you I expect they should, you ought at least to put it to a vote, that if a majority be against it, I may not have to justify myself to the King and the world, who ought to be satisfied that I have done all I can to serve the country and do my duty in my station."

To this generous, dignified and reasonable appeal from a man greater than they, the convention made no answer.

Fortunately for the Colony at this crisis, Captain Woodes Rogers had repulsed the Spanish fleet at Providence, so this danger was overpast; then came the *Flambourg*, man-of-war, and the *Phoenix* to Charles Town, whereupon strife arose between Governor and the convention as to whose party the ships would affect, and they declaring publicly for the Governor, his staunch heart was encouraged to make one more effort to regain the government for the Proprietors.

With a small party who still adhered to his cause, including also his daughter, Lady Kildare, Captain Maynard, Francis Yonge and Mr. Skrine, he embarked upon the *Flambourg*, commanded that both vessels be brought up in front of the city, which he straightway ordered to surrender to the lawful authority of the Lords Proprietors, failing which, he purposed without delay to destroy the rebellious town with broadsides from his men-of-war.

The city, however, felt itself vastly serene in the very strength that Governor Johnson had been at so much pains to provide. The defenses against the Spaniard were equally efficacious against English warships, there being seventy good guns on their ramparts, arms and ammunition in abundance, besides five hundred men under arms, who bid defiance to Governor Johnson.

Seeing that they were not minded to capitulate, Governor Johnson looked sadly over the town upon which he had commanded the guns of the *Phoenix* and *Flambourg* to be trained, and at this last it was borne upon him that the best loyalty in the world is wasted in a bad cause; that neither by love nor by fear could he move the people, threats being even as unavailing as persuasion to bring them back to their allegiance. Then he turned him sorrowfully to Captain Hildesly, who awaited his orders.

"The fight is over, Captain Hildesly," he spoke with great sadness. "I am obliged to you beyond words for your ready services, which I will not further require. I am resolved to move no further in this matter against my people, seeing that it is useless. I will await the King's pleasure in the



matter; but, and it is agreeable to you, we will remain upon your ship until the morrow." He turned, so finishing, and went down into his cabin alone.

"By my oath, that is a great man!" cried the bluff Captain, following him with admiring eyes. "I'd gladly risk several lives in his service, though God has given me but one."

The day wore on to afternoon, and mingled feelings there were in the hearts of the little band of refugees upon ship-board. There were sorrow and anger and gladness mixed withal in the hearts of some who had fought for the Governor but not for his cause.

When darkness fell upon the face of the waters they sat in silence somewhat apart. When one is alone under the stars on a frosty night the heart seems more open to the Infinite, quicker to the ineffable touch of the Divine, nearer to the comprehension of limitless life. So sat Damaris, her hands folded in her lap, and ever she thought upon the skies, and how one adds star to star and constellation to constellation, catching thereby a fleeting glimpse of the progression of the ages as writ in nature's eternal law, and with a sense of the immeasurableness of nature comes a sense of life's purposefulness and of the eternity of the soul. Then she brought her thoughts back to earth again. How strange it seemed to be out here, only the oaken planks between her and the limitless sea, only the stars above. She looked at the town. As a city of dreams it seemed to her, all of the old life set apart forever by a day as it were; all of its hopes and its fears and its loves

were as the life of another separated from her by the trackless sea. Then a wind came up across the chill levels of the bottomless sea. It moaned in the shrouds, it rattled in the rigging. She shivered, she hated the wind; it made her restless, it pulsed with the woe and throbbed with the anguish of the world. She tried to shut her ears. It voiced the blended misery of the world, all the cries of humanity, all of its sighs, its tears and its heartaches made up its sobbing breath; Hagar and Saul, Rizpah and Rachel, Francesca and Guinevere watched and wept, moaned and prayed. She shivered again with the thought. Francis Yonge stepped over and laid his cloak about her shoulders. She shook her head and would have declined.

"Nay, just this once, sweetheart; 'tis a little thing and the last." He spoke tenderly, lingering gently over the fastenings, resting his hands softly upon her the while.

She thanked him and fell back into her mood. He resumed his old position where he could watch her, himself in shadow.

"Faith, 'tis a right unmerry company. Methinks I have fallen into a graveyard full of ghosts," said Lady Kildare, yawning, as she suddenly waked from her nap.

"We had but respect for your slumbers," said Francis Yonge slyly.

"Ho, malapert, you are always monstrous ready with your tongue if not with your wit," replied her Ladyship sharply. "Fore the Lord Harry, we ought to be merry, and so would I be were it not for Robert Johnson," she said, glancing over to where

the Governor sat, head bowed upon his hand in thought. "I wonder why Providence makes good men into fools," she added; "and yet, 'pon my conscience, I would rather be Robert Johnson this night than the King's fool or his mistress."

The Governor rose and bowed to her Ladyship in acknowledgment of what she meant as a vastly fine compliment. She motioned him to a seat beside her, brushing aside her garments that smelled of France, drawing her furs closer about her, and fell into conversation with him concerning the times and their promise.

Some one called Mr. Yonge. He moved away, returning a little later, and took his position where he could again see Damaris's face in the light of a lantern that a sailor had hung on the mast.

"We are all friends here, methinks," he said, joining the group. "Yea, here are his Excellency, Lady Kildare, Mistress Damaris, Mr. Skrine as well; nay, but where is our friend Captain Maynard? Something I have to say that concerns him most nearly." Whereupon the latter, who was chatting with the ship's master at a little distance, hearing his name called, stepped forward.

"Truth, I am here. Is there something new from the town?"

"Good," said Mr. Yonge; "then have I not far to search, and what I have to say concerns not the town and its rebellions, but some of us present. Your Excellency, the morn with the tide sails the good ship *Gold of Ophir* for England. She bears dispatches from yourself and sundry other telling of events that have just taken place in the Colony.

Your Excellency, we have played a good game and we have lost; a fairer game it was than the scurvy temper of our masters warranted. The government has been wrenched from our hands, for this present we must continue as we be, seeing the temper of the people is greatly inflamed, and they by monstrous odds the stronger party. We can but bide the King's pleasure. With your Honor's permission I will sail upon the morn in the outward-bound vessel. Perchance in England I may do you some service, or mayhap furnish you with some information convenient for you. For the rest, know I not what my course will be, or when I shall come again I cannot say. Upon circumstance depends it, seeing that there are certain matters that interfere; seeing also that mine own people do constrain me in the matter to remain with them. Mayhap I come not again."

There was a murmur of surprise, questions, exclamations of regret. Damaris, with wide eyes and hands close pressed, spoke not a word. Captain Maynard breathed hard.

"I warrant, Mr. Yonge, that there be some explanation given before your departure," said the Governor sternly, laying his hand upon his daughter's shoulder.

"And it please your Excellency, and with your forbearance, I do come to that now, craving first your daughter's forgiveness for speaking of matters that concern her so nearly even among intimates; but it were better so."

"Proceed," said the Governor.

Francis Yonge looked at the girl, who bowed her head. He cleared his throat, then he looked up at

the stars. When he spoke at last his voice had grown exceeding gentle.

“Some months agone I asked Mistress Damaris to become my wife, and with her consent and that of your Honor I became betrothed to her, since which her conduct and loyalty have been above reproach. She has held to her word in truth and honor, under great stress, which know I full well, having overheard through mischance a conversation between her and another in which it did appear that they had loved each other long, but through misunderstanding and a coil of most mischievous circumstance an estrangement had come to pass. It chanced that gossip had made free with her name as receiving my attentions, for I had loved her long nor tried to hide it before the world, the rather gloried in it; and so it befell that in an hour of pain and shame she gave me her promise. Nay, therein is she not to blame; I did besiege her right manfully. She told me that she did not love me. I was glad of her promise, nevertheless, and right faithfully has she held to it—she would break her heart, but not her word. ‘Noble children are sprung from noble sires.’” He turned to the Governor, bowing low, with an affectation of his old careless grace.

“And now for that other,” he said, turning with grave eyes to Captain Maynard. “Perchance you have heard how some time since Captain Maynard and I tarried some weeks among the plantations. Well, ’tis a tale somewhat mistold, and the matter stands thus in truth: By chance he fell in with me journeying through the forest. I was sickening with a festering plague, seeing which he took me to his

hunting hut; yea, carried me in his arms well-nigh, endangering thereby his own life. In all patience and gentleness he nursed me back to health—and I was his enemy.”

“A noble enemy,” said the other, “and the claims of such are as binding as those of friends.”

“An enemy, nevertheless, and one whose life stood between you and the woman you loved.”

“By my troth, I would have done it for any man!” disclaimed the other.

“Perchance, but I was not any man; in very truth, I was the one man in the world whom it behooved you to be rid of. Let that be. With illness comes thought, and in the wilderness one grows to be nearer a man. Nay, but I wax tedious, like a gossiping beldame. I will draw to a close. Henceforth, with all honor, reverence and affection I resign all claims upon the hand of Mistress Damaris Johnson.”

“You are a right noble gentleman, Mr. Yonge,” said the Governor huskily, seizing his hand.

“And of generosity passing the sons of men!” cried Maynard gratefully, in a choked voice, while he wrung the other’s hand.

“I thank you from my heart, though words fail me. Your kindness and generosity are greater than I have deserved,” spoke Damaris, with deep feeling, though she raised not her eyes.

“You are a fool!” cried Lady Kildare. “You are all fools; all the world is mad, men and women wittings merely.”

“’Tis the proudest day of my life!” cried Jonathan Skrine, throwing his arm about his friend. “God

be praised for such a friend; truly my feet have fallen in pleasant places."

"You are a maundering old goody, friend Jonathan," said Francis Yonge mockingly; but he cast his arm about him in wordless affection.

"And now we do grow dramatic, now will I make my adieux," he said airily, turning to the Governor, with a grave face albeit.

"Good-by, your Excellency. 'Tis well to have dwelt in the wilderness to have come to know such a man. The next time I hope that we will fight in better cause together. God save the King, our only liege! In Carolina the sun has set for the last time upon the fair domains of the Lords Proprietors."

"Good-by, Mr. Yonge, and God-speed. The regrets of a Province that you have faithfully served go with you. Fair fortune favor your return to a people who love you."

"Good-by, my beloved Lady Kildare. Your affection and concern for me have been dear to me; my deepest gratitude is but a paltry return, and words are cold. I would serve you with my life!" he spoke warmly.

"Love's labor lost. Methinks the plague hath unbalanced thy brain or thou hast turned anchorite in the wilderness. Faugh! I do abominate a man of uncertain temper, and one white-blooded who gives up his love, fairly won, to another!" raged her Ladyship, while Francis Yonge raised her hand to his lips. "Fore the Lord Harry! I've half a mind to go with you myself; nay, but I won't neither; I will not give their Lordships so great satisfaction, seeing that they

argue that loyalty to them sends me into exile. Nay, nay, beshrew me, there yet may be backslidings; perchance I yet may work them some mischief and I stay. A grudge have I held against my Lord Carteret some score of years mayhap I may yet discharge and so increase my self-esteem. Come back again, boy; perchance I may have forgiven thee; I was ever of a forgiving temper." She ended with a sigh long-drawn, there was a break in the sharp voice and moisture in the hard, bright eyes of the indomitable old woman, and as Francis Yonge still bent low, his lips upon her hand, she laid the other trembling hand upon his shoulder.

"Farewell, Captain Maynard. As a friend I could do no less for you. Now may we call it quits in all save affection. Good fortune attend you."

"Nay, I am your debtor eternally, and my gratitude will reach to the grave and beyond."

"Nay, friend, 'tis not yet so proven," Yonge laughed lightly, the while he returned the strong hand-clasp of the Captain. "Matrimony is a lottery at best."

"And now friend Jonathan—" but the arms of his worthy friend were about him and he choked for utterance. "Nay, not so bear-like, friend; you murder my ruffles with your affection. Beshrew me, may you fall in love with dame ungentle and be treated in like fashion! Come out to England, and I come not back again, so will I show you the sights of the town and that right merrily."

"Forsooth, thou art a right lovable rogue, and we will grieve for thee more than a day," he mourned.



"Comfort thyself at cards; few smarts resist the balm of gold," he laughed; but the laugh was right unmerry and there was a man's heart in the handshake.

And now he turned slowly to where Damaris sat with bowed head and hands hard-clasped.

"Fair, sweet friend," he spoke tenderly. She raised her eyes to his; they were tender and pure as the star-shine above, her face as white as the May flowers. "Fair, sweet friend, farewell. A thousand thanks for the play-time we have had together. May life's earnest be as beautiful for you as the play-time has been for me."

Damaris felt his cold fingers close strongly over hers and the lips tremble as he pressed them upon her hand. She leaned over and kissed him lightly on his brow. He remained with bowed head as though receiving the benediction, then, lifting his head with the look of a king, walked swiftly to the ship's side.

"Hold steady there, my hearties; fast with you, I am coming down!" he called, and the moment after he had taken his place in the long-boat, the oars fell together in the water, the boat shot forward from under the ship's lee into the open.

After him were called the broken good-bys and God-speeds of the party crowding about the bulwarks. Over the phosphorescent waters, cloven by the oars into runnels of flame and showers of silver, the voice of Francis Yonge came back to them bravely:

"'Tis ho for merrie England, where all the men are brave, the women fair; and oh, but my heart is glad!"

" 'Tis a brave man and a true!" said the Governor heartily.

" 'Tis a witling and a ne'er-do-well. I might have sooner known it. Beshrew me, I know the breed well; 'tis not the first madcap of the race nor the first obstinate fool. I am weary of my life because of the marplots of men; almost sigh I to grow old that I may pass beyond it all. Nay, Mistress Damaris, fore the Lord Harry, thou art a deep one, for all thy guileless looks; never will I trust woman more. Do not stand there grinning at me, Tomahawk, because you think you have got the best of me. There is a story that tells of the biter bit; mayhap you will yet be worsted. Mistress Damaris has a most unruly temper, for all her pretty cajoleries. Nay, don't kiss me, girl; I'm not to be cozened like the asses called men; yet 'tis a pretty tale, and I'll forgive thee, seeing that thou art the only woman of wit in this wilderness and Francis Yonge gone. And now will I leave thee to thy mischievous devices, and it please your Honor, I would be handed to my cabin." She turned to the Governor and courtesied in her grand style; the Governor bowed ceremoniously and offered his arm. "Nay, but I loved that boy; some said that I loved his grandsire. Beshrew me if I ever set heart upon a man again! Good-night, pretty schemer, and plots and counterplots Master Tomahawk. I suppose heaven will bless you, whether I do or not. Heigho, 'tis a meddlesome world."

She took the Governor's extended arm, and with rustling of scented garments and tapping of heels and cane walked slowly across the deck. When she

reached the companion-way she paused and looked over to where shone the straggling lights of the little town all slumber-bound, where but late such acts of stirring interest had been enacted. "God save the King and confound our late masters!" she cried, waving her cane aloft.

"I do beseech your Ladyship to be more guarded in your language. I do hold this ship in their Lordships' name," urged the Governor.

"Fiddlesticks! You have played this mummer's game long enough, Robert Johnson, and all fools we who played it for love of you. May heaven confound their devices and bring their ambitions to naught. God save the King!"

She began the descent of the narrow stairs, grumbling at the darkness and the steepness.

"Forsooth, Governor, you will drink my toast with me yet, in the best of my old Madeira!" she cried, and her voice died out in the gloom below.

During the night the Governor, Damaris and Maynard remained upon deck, the happenings of the day and evening having left them with no desire for sleep. The heart of his Excellency was full of grief because of what had befallen him and his trust. The souls of the other two watchers thrilled to each other, heart yearned to heart, word surged upon word; but a fine sense of respect for the man who had passed from their lives, leaving them free, restrained them, as for one newly dead; they looked at each other and up at the skies with quiet eyes joy-filled.

The night wore away to the grey threadbareness of dawn, the morning star trembled to its white

death; like the grave-clothes of a mighty host lay the mist on the sea; from the city, now faintly astir, came the boom of the sunrise gun.

The Governor rose and stretched out his hands.

"O, little city, and stiff-necked people, whom I have loved, how have ye fallen from me, how failed in your allegiance! God knows I would have held you true!"

"No man could have done more," said Captain Maynard, rising and standing beside him. "What a man could do, you have done."

Damaris had risen too. She stood with her arm slipped into her father's.

"You have fought a good fight, nor swerved from your fealty, though all the world was against you. You have not brought shame upon the good old name," she said proudly.

"Whatever I have tried, so have I failed; but the name is clean. Aye, and the name has been safe in your keeping too, my daughter, and for son will I look to your husband." He took the girl's hand that lay in his arm and put it into that of her lover. "For you two who have held true through all stress, may life bring its blessings; for me life with its promise is ended!" Sadly he spoke and walked away, though in truth there was more the look of the conqueror than of the defeated in his fine old face.

"And for us, sweet soul," said Captain Maynard to the girl, who followed her father with eyes of sympathy, "for us the promise has just begun, sweet-heart."

Damaris turned her face to him, the rose light of sunrise showing it fairer than the dawn. Their eyes met; in them the deathless light of love; hand in hand, thrilled through, they stood in the opening splendor.

“The promise came long since, methinks, though we dared not touch it.” She flung back her head with the old happy laugh. “What think you of the fruit that is not forbidden?”





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